

Swedberg (E.) Baron von
Swedenborg

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DIALOGUES

ON THE

NATURE, DESIGN, AND EVIDENCE,

OF THE

THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS

OF THE HON.

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

WITH

A BRIEF ACCOUNT of some of his

PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS.

THE SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

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DICTIONARY

OF

THE LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND ANTIQUITIES

OF THE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AT

EMMANUEL SWISSBORG



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OF THE OROGRAPHICAL

OF THE

OF THE

To my much Respected FRIEND,

R***** D*****.

SIR,

I HAD lately the Happiness, on two several Occasions, of being present in Company, where the Writings of BARON SWEDENBORG were the Subject of Conversation. The chief Speakers were a young Man, whom, on Account of his singular Modesty, Candour, and good Sense, I shall at present call SOPHRON, and an elderly Country Clergyman, whom I shall beg Leave to introduce to you under the Name of PHILADELPHIUS, by Reason of his unbounded Charity and Benevolence.

The Company seemed attentive to the Conversation, and were too much

interested in it to endeavour to divert it to any other Subject; and I, for my own Part, was so fully satisfied with what was said, and it made such an Impression on my Mind, that when I came home I determined to write it down; and I herewith send you a Copy of what I have written, in the Way of Dialogue between the two Speakers above-mentioned, believing it to contain, as nearly as possible, the Substance of all that was said on either Side.

That you may the better enter into the Spirit of the Dialogue, it may be expedient to acquaint you further with the Characters of the Speakers. SOPHRON is a young Student just returned from the University, and preparing to enter into the Ministry, and had never seen the Writings of Baron Swedenborg till after his first Conversation with

with PHILADELPHUS on the Subject, but is since become a great Admirer and diligent Reader of them. PHILADELPHUS, on the other Hand, has been an assiduous Reader of those Writings for many Years, and to a very clear and comprehensive Knowledge of their Contents, has joined a suitable Practice, his whole Life being under the Regulation of a truly Christian Spirit. He never speaks on Baron Swedenborg, or the Subject of his Writings, but with a Degree of Animation which warms and delights his Hearers, convincing them that he is in earnest, and yet with a Spirit of Moderation, Candour, and Charity, which prevents their being captious or offended. He says, the Tendency of those Writings is so truly *Christian*; they so exalt the *Christian* Redeemer; so open, explain, and reconcile the

Christian Scripture; so teach and enforce a truly *Christian* Life; that the Piety they inculcate is so sublime, and the Morality so pure; the Reasoning contained in them so solid, and the Variety of heavenly Knowledge they unfold so extensive, that it is impossible but every Christian, who has any Spark of Goodness in his Heart, must sooner or later greatly revere them, and find himself benefited by the instructive Lessons therein presented to him. Nevertheless, PHILADELPHUS is not hasty to press these Writings upon any Person, unless he observes a previous good Disposition, likely to make a proper Use of them: He says that others would only read them in a vain Spirit of Curiosity, for the Sake of talking and disputing about them, and would thus separate themselves further from the genuine End of the Truths they contain,

and

and the Virtues they inculcate, which are Humility, Charity, the right Worship of God, and a truly pious Life. PHILADELPHUS is on this Account much afraid of these Writings being *misconceived*, and thereby *perverted* and *abused* by those who read them in the above-mentioned Spirit; and therefore he most earnestly cautions all, especially young Persons, to read them with *humble Minds*, seeking rather to *mend their Hearts*, than to *fill their Heads with mere Knowledge*. He says that much Science, especially of holy Things, if it be not well qualified by Humility and Charity, produces *spiritual Intoxication*, and that more real Mischief comes from such a *beated intemperate Zeal* in Favour of what is called Truth, before it is well tempered with Charity, through Humility, Submission, and Obedience, than from almost any other Source.

Source. Hence, he has often told me, he dates the Birth of *Persecutions, Heresies, Schisms, and Sectaries* of divers Kinds, with all that Variety of *external Changes, Rejections of old Forms of Worship, and Adoptions of new Ones*, which, in all Ages, under an Appearance of reforming the Church, have left it as unsanctified as before, only changed in Name and Rituals, but not in Power and Effect. PHILADELPHUS therefore most affectionately recommends it to all, who read the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, to be sure to understand them aright, and to join to such Understanding sound Charity, Sobriety of Mind, and Discreetness, through Obedience, before they go forth, either publicly or privately, to make them known to others, lest their Zeal for the Truth being *without Knowledge*, they should do more Harm than Good. He advises
also,

also, rather to have Respect to the Principle of *Good* in others, than to their particular Sentiments and Opinions; for he contends, that all who are truly good are *right*, or soon will be so; and that if they are not *good*, or *desirous* to become so, it matters not what they *believe*, *think*, or *know*.

PHILADELPHUS has the most consolatory enlarged Views of the *New Jerusalem* Dispensation pointed at in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg. He says, *he doubts not* but sooner or later it will become *universal*, extending to and blessing all *Nations, People, and Languages*, being unconfined to any particular Forms or Rituals of external Worship, and yet tending to purify and exalt all, by directing them to their proper End, the Knowledge and the Love of JESUS CHRIST. "Whosoever (says he) in any Part of the Earth, or in external

" Com-

" Communion with any Church, wor-
 " ships the *Lord God* the Redeemer in
 " Spirit and in Truth, keeping his
 " Commandments of Love and Charity,
 " and bringing forth the Fruits thereof
 " in his Life and Actions, he belongs to
 " the *true Church* of JESUS CHRIST,
 " is a member of his Body, and an Heir
 " of his Kingdom." It gives PHILA-
 DELPHUS therefore much Concern, when
 he hears of any who (contending for
 Forms and external Expressions of Wor-
 ship) are zealous and eager about *Changes*
 in such outward Things. It is his com-
 mon Saying on such Occasions, " The
 " natural Man will be busy in his own
 " *Element*;" to which he sometimes
 adds, " A Change of Words and Forms
 " of Worship has a fine Sound, and makes
 " a fair Show before Men, but God
 " seeks and loves a Change of Hearts
 " and Lives:" And therefore he ear-
 nestly

nestly counsels all the Readers of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, in this Respect rather to regard Purity of Heart and Life, as the *essential* Worship in which God most delights, telling them that *to the pure all Things are pure*; and pressing upon them the Observance of those Words of the Lord, "Cleanse
 "first that which is within the Cup and
 "Platter, that the Outside of them may
 "be clean also." * Nevertheless, PHILADELPHUS is of Opinion, that sooner or later, as genuine Truth becomes more generally known and practised, it will exert it's salutary Influence even upon the *Externals* of Worship in every Christian Church. But this he says can only be effected gradually according to Order, and by Persons who have Authority to change human Ordinances, and at all Events must be done with singular Prudence

* Matt. xxiii. 25.

dence and Caution, otherwise it will be attended with mischievous Consequences; and therefore he advises all, in this Respect, to wait patiently the Lord's own Time, and the Operations of his Providence, not running faster in their own Spirits than the Will of God leads them, but *submitting to the Ordinances of Man for the Lord's Sake*, under a full Assurance, that howsoever imperfect their present *Externals of Worship* may be, they themselves are accepted in the Sight of JESUS CHRIST, provided only they be sincere in the Use of them, having a true Respect therein to this *Almighty Father and Redeemer of Men*, and to his Commandments.

Such are some of PHILADELPHUS's leading Sentiments; and as I conceived them to be agreeable to your own, I have therefore sent you a Copy of the Dialogues, in which you will see them further

further enlarged on, with an Addition of others, which may perhaps give you equal Pleasure.

If it should appear to you, that these Dialogues may be any Means either of recommending, or of preventing the Abuse of, the valuable Writings in Question, you are at Liberty to communicate them to your private Friends, or to the Public, in any Way that you may judge most expedient.

I remain, with all Respect,

Your's, &c.

THE AUTHOR.

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DIA-

Further enlarged copy of a letter
of mine and a very pretty one
of mine to you, and the
Dedication may be any means
incomparable or of great value
Addition of a valuable picture
from your most famous collection
that you have given to me
I have in my collection
I will copy them
I remain, with great respect,
Your most obedient servant

John C. T. 1818

DIALOGUES, &c.

BETWEEN

SOPHRON AND PHILADELPHUS.

SOPHRON.

YOU have read then all the Writings of Baron Swedenborg?

PHIL. All his *Theological* Writings which have been published, and I believe the most important of his *Philosophical* Works.

SOPH. Was the Author then a Philosopher as well as a Theologian?

PHIL. Natural Philosophy appears to have been the favourite Pursuit of his early Years, and he soon attracted the

Attention of the learned World by his various Publications on Philosophical Subjects.

SOPH. Pray, Sir, may I ask what were the Titles of his Philosophical Works?

PHIL. Of those which I have seen, one of the most important and voluminous is entitled, *Works Philosophical and Mineral*. It was printed under the Author's own Inspection, Part at Leipzig, Part at Dresden, in three Volumes Folio, in the Year 1734. Another Work equally important, though not so large, is entitled *The Economy of the Animal Kingdom*, in two Parts, printed at Amsterdam in the Years 1740 and 1741, in Quarto. Another has for its Title, *The Animal Kingdom*, in three Parts, one Part printed at the Hague, and the other at London, in the Years 1744 and 1745, in Quarto. The above Works were written in Latin; and besides

fides these, several other Philosophical Pieces were published by him, some in Latin, and some in the Swedish Language, which I never read. The Titles however have been communicated to me, and are as follow.

I. *Dædalus Hyperboreus Stockholmiæ*, 1716, 1717, 1718, in Quarto, in six Parts, consisting of Essays and Remarks on some Branches of Mathematics and Philosophy.

II. An Introduction to Algebra, under the Title of the Art of the Rules, published in the year 1717.

III. An Attempt towards fixing the Value of Money, and finding a Standard for Measures, in such a Manner as to suppress Fractions, and thus facilitate Calculation.

IV. On the Position and Motion of the Earth and the other Planets, 1719.

V. Of the Heighth of the Tides,

with Proofs drawn from Facts in Sweden, to shew that the Flux and Reflux of the Sea was greater formerly than it is at present, 1719.

VI. An Essay on the Principles of Natural Things, or the Way to explain Experimental Philosophy by Geometry and Chemistry.

VII. New Observations and Discoveries on Fire and on Iron, but more particularly on the Nature of elementary Fire, together with a new Form for constructing of Chimnies.

VIII. A new Method of discovering the Longitude, whether at Sea or on Land, by the Moon.

IX. Miscellaneous Observations, or a Collection of Observations on different Objects of natural History, particularly on Minerals, on Fire, on the Strata of Mountains, and an Essay on ChrySTALLIZATION: There are besides these
some

some other small Tracts of less Importance.

SOPH. If you would not think me too inquisitive, I should be glad to be informed more particularly concerning the Nature of Baron Swedenborg's Philosophy, and the Subjects of the Works which you have read, as I should wish to be acquainted with every Circumstance that might help me to form a right Judgment of so extraordinary a Man; and it appears to me, that if his Philosophy be sound and consistent, and supported by solid Principles, it will be a strong Argument in Favour of his Theology.

PHIL. If I may be allowed to form a Judgment from what I have read, you will find the Philosophical Works of Baron Swedenborg full of solid Reasoning and deep Investigation; at the same Time you will admire the Order and methodical

dical Arrangement in which he hath treated his several Subjects. His Genius was most penetrating and comprehensive; he was not contented with a superficial View of Nature's Operations, but dived into her Depths and inmost Recesses, whence he hath brought up many Pearls of natural Knowledge for those, who have the Curiosity to search for, and the Judgment to discern their Value. He was not however a *Self-taught* Philosopher. He had enriched and enlarged his Understanding with the Writings of the most distinguished Authors, on their respective Subjects, in the several Countries of Europe; so that *Geometry, Physics, Chemistry, Anatomy, Metallurgy*, and the whole Train of the Sciences, according to all the Improvements of modern Discovery, served him as Materials with which to erect the well constructed Fabric of his own Systems.

His

His Philosophy, at the same Time that it enlightens the Understanding, improves the Heart. He did not think it the Province of Science to darken the sublime Truths of Theology; and you will therefore always find him referring natural Phenomena to spiritual Agency. He never loses Sight of the close Connection between the two Worlds of Matter and of Spirit; and thus his System opens to the Mind the most edifying Speculations, by teaching it to consider all the visible Universe, with every Thing that it contains, as a Theatre and Representation of that invisible World from which it first derived it's Existence, and by Connection with which it continually subsists.

SOPH. You mentioned having read his Book entitled *Works Philosophical and Mineral*; pray, Sir, what is the particular Subject and Design of that Book?

PHIL.

PHIL. It contains, in the first Volume, an Inquiry into the Principles of natural Things, beginning with an Investigation of the Laws of Action in what is called, by the Author, the *first natural Point*, or the first and most individual Limit of spiritual Agency in the World of Nature. The Philosopher next proceeds to the Consideration of what he calls the *first Finite of Matter*, with it's Activities; and hence he deduces the Origin of the Elements, with their several Motions, Figures, Qualities, and Modes of Operation. This naturally leads him into a curious and interesting Inquiry into the Existence and Nature of the Sun and it's Vortex, the Causes and Laws of Magnetic Powers, the original Chaos, the Formation of the Earth, the first State of Paradise and of Man therein, with other Speculations alike entertaining and important; in all
which

which you will be at a Loss which to admire most, the solid Learning, the deep Investigation, the mature Judgment, or the unaffected Piety of the Philosopher. The two other Volumes of this extraordinary Work form a complete System of *Metallurgy*, but with more particular Reference to the chemical Operations relating to Iron and Copper, in the Perusal of which the curious Chemist and practical Mechanic will find their Curiosity abundantly gratified, and their Pains well rewarded.

SOPH. And pray, Sir, what is the particular Subject and Design of the two other Philosophical Works, which you say you have read, the one entitled *The Animal Kingdom*, and the other *The Economy of the Animal Kingdom*?

PHIL. They relate to the Structure of the human Body and it's several Parts, with their respective Uses, highly worthy

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thy of the Attention of every Lover of Science; for the Subject Matter, the Manner in which it is treated, and the sublime Conclusions which are thence deduced. You will there see collated the Experiments and Discoveries of the most celebrated modern Anatomists and Naturalists, as *Heister, Winslow, Malpighius, Swammerdam, Boerhaave, Cowper, Ruyschius, Leeuwenboek*, and others; and you will see those Experiments and Discoveries examined with the most discriminating Judgment, and the most sublime Reasonings deduced from them according to the Laws of the most critical Analysis. You will in short find yourself led insensibly from a just Anatomy to a true and rational *Psychology*, where you will be surprised to see established the most important and instructive Truths relating to the human Spirit, with a Degree of Evidence and Conviction

viction which you would imagine the Subject incapable of. Every individual human Body, according to the Discoveries of Baron Swedenborg, consists of several Orders of Forms, distinguished from each other according to Degrees of Purity, wherein the lowest Degree is the Basis or Receptacle of one still purer and more interior, and this again of a higher Degree which is the most pure and inmost. In this highest Degree the human Spirit hath it's Residence, being a *spiritual organized Form*, corresponding to that of the Body, and communicating Life thereto, whilst the Spirit itself receiveth Life from the spiritual World. And here our Philosopher arrives at a Conclusion of the highest Consequence to be rightly considered and understood, viz. that the Cause and Origin of the Organization, Life, and Action of the human Body, is to be deduced from the

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Organi-

Organization, Life, and Action of the human Spirit, received by continual Influx from the Father of Beings, the Source of all Life, and the primary Cause of all Action in all the Creatures which he hath made.

SOPH. I am much obliged to you for opening to me this clear though concise View of the Philosophy of Baron Swedenborg; which, I must confess, appears much in his Favour, and inclines me to give more Credit to his theological Sentiments; for though I believe a Man may be a good Theologian without Learning and Philosophy, and that heavenly Truth is of such Simplicity as to admit of being both clearly understood and communicated without the Aids of earthly Sciences, yet where old Opinions are controverted, and new Ones adopted, as I am told is the Case in the Theological Writings of Baron Swe-

Swedenborg, it should seem as if all Qualifications and Assistances would be necessary on the Part of the Writer, to oppose the Prejudices of others, and recommend his own Sentiments.

PHIL. Such Qualifications and Assistances were not wanting to Baron Swedenborg, and whether we regard his natural Genius and acquired Learning, his Family Connections, his Purity of Life and Character, or the Employments and Dignities to which he was exalted in Consequence of these Qualifications, I think we need not scruple to assert, that he was a Person admirably fitted both to discover the Truth himself, and to recommend it to others.

SOPH. You have given me sufficient Proof of his Genius and Learning: I should be glad to know Something of his Family Connections, and his private

Character, together with his Employments and Dignities.

PHIL. As to his Family Connections, he was the Son of *Jesper Swedberg*, who was Bishop of *West-Gotbia*, and of celebrated Character in his Time. He had four Sisters, one of whom was married to *Eric Benzelius*, afterwards made Archbishop of *Upsal*: Another was married to *Lars Benzelfstierna*, who was promoted to a provincial Government. In Regard to his private Character, it appears to have been altogether irreproachable, or rather altogether most commendable, being formed in every Respect according to the excellent Spirit of the four Rules which he prescribed for the Regulation of his daily Conduct, and which were found amongst his Manuscripts after his Decease, viz. I. *To read frequently the Word of God, and meditate*
much

much upon it. II. To be always resigned to, and content under the Care of Providence. III. To observe a Decency and Propriety of Conduct, and to keep a Conscience pure and without Offence. IV. To be obedient to what is ordained, faithful in the Discharge of the Duties of his Station, and to do all in his Power to render himself useful to all without Exception. As to his Employment and Dignities, they were such as might justify the Expectations which his extraordinary Qualities had given Birth to; for at a very early Age he became an Object of royal Attention and Favour, being admitted to frequent Converse with Charles XII. then King of Sweden, and appointed by him to the Office of Assessor of the Mettallic College, a Place of great public Trust and Emolument. He was also ennobled in the Year 1719, by Queen Ulrica Eleanora, and named Swedenborg,

from which Time he took his Seat with the Nobles of the Equestrian Order, in the Triennial Assemblies of the States. He was made a Fellow (by Invitation) of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Stockholm, and had a like Honour conferred on him by foreign Societies. He lived in much Esteem with the Bishops and Nobles of his own Country, and his Acquaintance was also sought after by the most distinguished Persons in various Parts of Europe, with many of whom he continued to correspond till his Death.

SOPH. Sir, I must acknowledge that, according to your Account, the Character of Baron Swedenborg claims Respect, and promises to add all the Authority to his Doctrines that can be derived from such a Source. But still, Sir, you will excuse me if I have yet my Doubts: Great Philosophers, we know, and Men
of

of the most extensive Learning, and of the finest Talents (whether natural or acquired) have not always been most distinguished for their Knowledge of Divine Truths. Baron Swedenborg therefore might be an excellent Scholar and a good Metallurgist, and yet but an indifferent Theologian. Pardon me then, if, for fuller Satisfaction on a Subject of such Importance, I trouble you with some further Inquiries.

PHIL. I shall not account it any Trouble to answer all your Questions according to the best Light that I myself have received; and it will be a particular Pleasure to me, if either your Questions or my Answers may conduce to the Discovery of the *real* Truth, which I trust is the *principal Object* we both have at Heart, and are in Pursuit of.

SOPH. I feel myself happy in the
Liberty

Liberty you allow me of seeking Information, and trusting with you that Truth is the only Ground of my Inquiry, and not Curiosity or barren Speculations, and still less the Petulance of Controversy, I shall herein ground my first Question, wishing you to explain a principal Difficulty, which I confess perplexes me in Regard to the Theological Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and which is this—If the Truth be contained in those Writings, why does it not strike all Men alike with the Force of it's Evidence? I have always conceived Truth to be Somewhat so clear and convincing in itself, that it carried it's own Testimony along with it; but in Regard to the Theological Writings of Baron Swedenborg, the Opinions of Men are much divided: Some insist they contain the most unequivocal Characters of Truth, whilst others assert the direct contrary.

contrary. How then can these Writings contain the Truth?

PHIL. Your Difficulty herein, my dear Sir, is grounded solely in your own wrong Conception respecting the Evidence of Truth. It is certain, Nothing is *in itself* so clear and so convincing as *Truth*; but then it is equally certain, that all Minds are not in a *State* to be so affected by it's Clearness, as to receive Conviction. I fancy we are both agreed, that Nothing is more true than *the Word of God*, this being the very *essential Truth*; and yet, how plain is it to see that *the Word of God itself* does not carry Conviction with it to all Minds! The Reason whereof is plainly pointed out by our Lord, where he says, "He that is
" of God heareth God's Words; ye
" therefore hear them not, because ye
" are not of God."* Your Argument
therefore

* John viii. 47.

therefore will apply equally against the *Truth* of the *Holy Scriptures*, as against the *Writings* of *Baron Swedenborg*.

SOPH. But might not the *Writings* of *Baron Swedenborg*, supposing them to contain the *Truth*, have been more clear and satisfactory? I am told there are many Things contained therein of a deep and mysterious Nature, which few, if any, can comprehend; many Things also, especially in his *memorable Relations*, which are Matter of Stumbling and Offence, even to well-disposed Minds: Now, supposing these *Writings* to contain *the Truth*, how is it that they contain such deep Mysteries, which can be profitable to very few, and such offensive Passages as may prove a Stumbling-block to many?

PHIL. You do not surely consider, Sir, that this Argument also will hold equally good against the *Holy Scriptures*,

tures, as against the Writings of Baron Swedenborg. (Do not misconceive me however, as if I meant hereby to put the Holy Scriptures and the Writings of Baron Swedenborg on a Level, and to consider them alike inspired.) I only wish to observe, that in the Holy Scriptures there are many Things of a deep mysterious Nature, which few, if any, comprehend; and there are many Things also which have given, and do still give great Offence, and prove a Stumbling-block to several; and yet no wise Man considers such Things as Arguments against their high Reasonableness and Truth. Numberless weighty and solid Reasons might be assigned in Justification of the Divine Wisdom, in dispensing Truths to Mankind under mysterious, and, in some Instances, offensive Forms: I shall beg Leave to mention only *One*, which strikes my own Mind

Mind more particularly, and which is this: It appears to me much better for some Persons, that they should meet with *Offence* respecting the Truth, and be thereby prevented from seeing, acknowledging, and receiving it, since the Truth itself, if seen, acknowledged, and received, would but hurt them the more by increasing their Condemnation.

SOPH. How, Sir! The Truth hurt any one by increasing his Condemnation! I confess I do not understand your Meaning.

PHIL. My Meaning, my dear Sir, is neither more nor less than what is contained in these few but weighty Words of the Lord on the same Subject, where speaking to the Pharisees he says, "If ye were blind, ye should have no Sin; but now ye say, We see, therefore your Sin remaineth;"* from which

* John ix. 14.

which Words it should appear, that it would have been better for the Pharisees, and they would have been less sinful, had they been totally *blind* as to the Light of Truth, than *seeing* as they fancied they *saw*; and therefore, as I observed, it may be perfectly consistent with the Counsels of the Divine Mercy and Wisdom, to hide such Light from some Men's Eyes, either by enveloping it in Mystery and Obscurity, or by presenting it under such an *offensive external Form*, as may prevent them from seeing, acknowledging, and receiving it: And thus God is exceeding merciful, in some Cases, even where he seems to us most cruel, as where it is written, "He hath
 " blinded their Eyes, and hardened their
 " Heart, that they should not see with
 " their Eyes, nor understand with their
 " Heart, and be converted, and I should
 " heal them." *

D

SOPH.

* John xii. 40. Matt. xxiii. 14. Isaiah vi. 9.

SOPH. What you say, Sir, appears to have some Foundation; but I confess I cannot at present clearly comprehend the Ground and Reasonableness of it.

PHIL. Cannot you comprehend, Sir, that the sole End and Design of all *Knowledge* and *Instruction*, which we call *Truth*, is to amend the Heart and Life, by purifying the Will, by regulating the Affections, and reforming the whole Man from earthly to heavenly Dispositions? Now, if you can comprehend this *End* and *Design* of *Truth*, you will at once discover the Ground and Reason, why the Divine Wisdom is so scrupulously exact both as to the Mode and Measure of dispensing heavenly Truths to Man. For if a Man's Will and Affections be in so corrupt a State, as not to fulfil the *End* of *Truth*, by yielding an entire Obedience to it's Dictates, and thus coming into Reformation and Purification,

rification, it is very evident that Truth, to such a Person, would not only be a very unprofitable, but a very hurtful Gift, as it would be the Means of his sinning against a greater Light than before, and would thus bring upon him a greater Condemnation, according to those other Words of the Lord to the same Purport, "That Servant which
 "knew his Lord's Will, and prepared
 "not himself, neither did according to
 "his Will, shall be beaten with many
 "Stripes."*

SOPH. I think, Sir, I begin to understand you: You argue that the great End of Truth is Charity, or a good Life; and therefore that Truth is only so far dispensed to Man, and is useful to him, as he is in a Disposition to be led thereby to Charity, and by Charity to Newness of Life: I admit the Force

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of

* Luke xii. 47.

of your Argument, and trust that what you have said will be an useful Lesson to me for the future as to the Evidence I may seek of Truth, as well as in Regard to the Use I shall make of it. I thank you also for opening to me a new and most satisfactory View of the Divine Wisdom in dispensing Truth or Knowledge to every one, according to the Use they will make of it in applying it to Life, and consequently in withholding it from those who would not be faithful in such Application of it. And methinks I see now an additional Force and Beauty in those Words of the Psalmist, "Them that are meek shall he guide in Judgment, and such as are gentle, them shall he learn his Way."*

PHIL. It gives me much real Pleasure to find that your Eyes are opened

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* Psalm xxv. 8.

to see into a Matter of so much real Importance; and I trust that for the future you will ever live under this Conviction; that Truth may be Truth, and yet be full of Mysteries, yea, even of Offences and apparent Contradictions, when viewed by Persons of a certain Character, who are not in a State to profit by it in their Hearts and Lives; whilst to the *meek* and *gentle* and well-prepared Mind, it will be found perfectly clear, convincing, and satisfactory, in all Respects; because being applied to the Regulation of the Life, which is it's sole End, it will manifest it's Certainty in it's Tendency to produce all the salutary Effects of a pure Love towards God, and a pure Charity towards Man, in which the true Regulation of the Life consists.

SOPH. I believe it is possible this may be the Case, and I hope I shall be

enabled so to profit by your Observations, both in reading the Holy Scriptures and other Books written by Persons of acknowledged Piety, as not to be offended at those Passages which may appear either mysterious or contradictory. But still, Sir, you will excuse me, if I cannot help thinking that the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg would have been rendered more effectual and convincing, had it been supported by some *miraculous* Evidence; and I am of Opinion, that in a Matter of such Importance, as the Subject of his Writings seems to be, (so far as I can learn from others, for I have not yet read them myself,) it was necessary it should have been recommended and enforced in a Manner so extraordinary, and by Signs so indisputable, that none could have been able to gainsay or resist it. For my own Part, I must confess, had the
Author

Author been enabled to confirm his Doctrines by *Miracles*, I should have made no Scruple to admit instantly their high Authority, and have paid them an implicit Obedience.

PHIL. You conceive *Miracles* then, Sir, to be proper Tests of Truth?

SOPH. I do.

PHIL. And to be convincing Tests also?

SOPH. Yes.

PHIL. And to be required as necessary Confirmations of every Dispensation of Truth?

SOPH. So I conceive.

PHIL. Will you answer me then these few plain Questions? Why were not all alike convinced by our Lord's Miracles, and by those which *Moses* wrought in the Presence of the Children of Israel? Why does our Lord reprove the Jews for laying so much Stress upon

upon this supernatural Evidence, as where he says, "An evil and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign?" * And in another Place, "Except ye see Signs and Wonders, ye will not believe?" † Why were the Magicians of Egypt permitted to imitate the Miracles wrought by Moses and Aaron? ‡ Why are *false Christs*, and *false Prophets*, the *Dragon*, the *Beast*, and *Antichrist*, described as shewing great Signs and Wonders? § Why is it written, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the Dead?" || Why did not John the Baptist work Miracles, when yet he bare a faithful Witness to the

* Matt. xii. 39. xvi. 4. † John iv. 48.

‡ See Exod. vii. 11, 22. Chap. viii. 7.

§ See Matt. xxiv. 24. Rev. xiii. 13. Chap. xvi.

14. 2 Theff. ii. 9.

|| Luke xvi. 31.

the Truth? And lastly, Why doth not the Almighty still work Miracles for the Conviction and Conversion of Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heathens?—Do not misconceive me, as if I meant by these Questions to invalidate, in any Respect, the Divine Authority of Miracles, or to infer from hence that they are of *no* Use in the Confirmation of Truth: I thank God, I feel my Mind penetrated with a deep and lively Sense of that Divine Power, which hath in all Ages thus discovered itself unto Man, and confirmed the Dictates of it's own heavenly Wisdom by such weighty Proofs; and I am willing to allow the Force of such Evidence as far as it goes: All I would contend for respecting Miracles is, that they are not the *only proper, convincing, or necessary* Tests of Truth, and that Truth may be Truth without such Tests.

SOPH.

SOPH. But may I ask then, To what End did our Lord and his Apostles work Miracles?

PHIL. The Miracles wrought by our Lord, and by his Apostles in his Name, had surely a *further* End than the mere Confirmation of the Truth of what they taught, being intended as so many *outward natural* Signs, to signify and make known unto Man the Nature of the Divine Power, in it's *inward* and *spiritual* Operations. Every Miracle therefore was an important Lesson of heavenly Truth and Instruction to such as could view it in a spiritual Light, inasmuch as it bore a most faithful Testimony to that redeeming Virtue communicated from the *incarnate* God to the Soul *inwardly*, which it was then seen to do for the Body *outwardly*. I am always therefore much grieved to hear it asserted, that the *sole* Design of Miracles is to
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confirm the Truth of Doctrine, when it must be very plain to every considerate Mind, that true Divine Miracles, if rightly regarded, do themselves *teach* and *declare* the Truth, as well as *confirm* it: It is well however to observe, that they neither teach nor confirm the Truth, except to such as are in a State to receive the *proper* and *genuine* Evidence of Truth itself; and I will venture to add further, that the Evidence arising from Miracles *may be* dangerous and hurtful to others not in that State.

SOPH. In what Respects?

PHIL. In *compelling* Belief, where the Heart is not in a State to profit by it; in which Case, as was hinted before concerning Knowledge, it would be better not to believe. For the great End of Faith, or Belief, like that of Knowledge, being to reform and amend the Life, if the Heart be not in a State to be

be reformed and amended, Faith or Belief is not only useless, but even prejudicial in increasing Condemnation, by causing Man to sin against a greater Evidence than he would otherwise do.

SOPH. You believe then, Sir, that the Evidence arising from Miracles is only *accessory* as it were to the *genuine* Evidence of Truth, and that the genuine Evidence of Truth itself, as contained in itself, and communicated by and from itself, is it's most proper and convincing Evidence?

PHIL. I believe so; and this in Conformity to the Lord's own Declaration, where he says, "If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God;" * and in another Place, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" † Our Lord here points out the *proper* and

* John vii. 17.

† Luke xii. 57.

and *convincing* Evidence of Truth, as arising from the *Doctrine* of Truth itself, and in Agreement with that Principle in Man which is capable of *judging* respecting it; and he points out also the proper Qualification for judging right, and being rightly convinced, viz. a sincere Desire *to do the Will of God*.

SOPH. I think, Sir, I begin to apprehend the Force of your Reasoning; but how shall I apply it so as to remove my Difficulties in Regard to the Writings of Baron Swedenborg? Do they contain such *internal, proper, and convincing* Evidence as you conceive to be the Characteristic of Truth? If so, be kind enough to point out to me this Evidence in a few Instances; for from the Love which I trust I bear towards the Truth, I am persuaded it will give me Pleasure to acknowledge it, wheresoever I find it.

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PHIL.

PHIL. I shall be happy to give you every Satisfaction in my Power on this Subject: Nevertheless there are some Things to be premised, respecting the *Measure and Kind of Evidence to be looked for* on this Occasion; and also respecting *the Persons to whom such Evidence is proposed*, in Order to the forming a right Judgment. In Respect to the *Measure and Kind of Evidence to be looked for*, I should wish first to observe, that we are not to expect, either in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, or in any other human Writings, the *real Truth itself*.

SOPH. How, Sir! not expect the real Truth itself! What are we to expect then? I confess I do not understand you.

PHIL. Have a little Patience, Sir, and you will see clearly what I mean. All that human Writings can do, or are intended to do, is, like St. John the Baptist,

Baptist, to *bear Witness to the Truth*; they are not *properly themselves the Truth*, but are *Attestators of the Truth*: I am here speaking to you as a Christian and a Philosopher, and therefore shall not scruple to declare, that *Truth, properly so called*, is not of human Origin; it is a Thing purely Divine; and of Consequence, as *there is none Good but One, and that One is God*, so, *properly speaking*, there is none *true*, or the *Truth*, but One, and that is God and his *Word*; therefore our Lord, as being God, calleth himself, by Way of Eminence, *the Truth*;* and giveth the same holy Appellation also to his Word.†

SOPH. What would you infer from hence?

PHIL. That, *properly speaking*, we are not to look, either in the Writings

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* John xiv. 6.

† John viii. 40, 45, 46. Chap. xvii. 17; and in other Places.

of Baron Swedenborg, or in any other human Writings, for the *real Truth itself*, but only for a *Witness* to the Truth; and it will therefore be a sufficient Evidence in Favour of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, if they can be proved to bear a *faithful Witness* to the Truth.

SOPH. You conceive then, Sir, this to be the true Distinction between the Word of God and the Words of Man, that the Word of God is the *real Truth itself*, and the Words of Man are only so far true, as they bear a *faithful Witness to the Word of God*?

PHIL. That is my Meaning: For as in natural Philosophy, the *real Truth* of that Science is the Wisdom of the Deity manifested in the various Works of Creation, so the true Philosopher cannot so properly be said to speak that Wisdom, as to bear *Witness* to it, by opening and explain-

explaining it's marvellous Operations; in like Manner in Theology, the *real Truth* of this Divine Science is the Wisdom of the Deity manifested in his Word, and the true Theologian cannot so properly be said to speak this Wisdom, as to *bear Witness* to it, by opening and explaining it's true Senses and Significations.

SOPH. You would have the Theological Writings of Baron Swedenborg regarded then as *bearing Testimony* or *Witness* to the Truth, and would establish an Evidence in their Favour according to this View of them?

PHIL. I would; and considered in this View, and according to the Distinction here pointed out between the *real Truth itself*, and a *Witness to the Truth*, it appears to me that the Evidence in Favour of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg is such, as no *serious*

Christian can possibly oppose, or reject. I say *no serious Christian*, because notwithstanding the Weight of Evidence in the present Case, much will still depend on *the Persons to whom such Evidence is proposed*.

SOPH. But perhaps the Qualifications required to admit this Evidence may be such as to fall to the Share of very few Persons?

PHIL. No, Sir; I require only those Qualifications which ought to be *common to all Christians*, viz. an Acknowledgment of the Divinity and Spirituality of the Holy Scriptures, or Word of God, attended with a sincere Desire to understand the genuine Truth thereof, for the Purpose of living a Life conformable thereto. Where these Qualifications are found to exist together, I have no Doubt but the Evidence in Favour of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg,

denborg, *as bearing a faithful Witness to the Truth*, will be found most convincing. But if all, or either of these Qualifications be wanting; if the Mind, for Instance, be in so disordered a State, as not to be willing to allow the Divinity and Spirituality of the Holy Scriptures; or, allowing this, if it be more contentious for Systems of established Opinions and the Traditions of Men, than for the Discoveries of genuine Truth from the Word of God; or, supposing it even an Advocate for the Truth, if it be yet careless respecting a Conformity of Life to the heavenly and purifying Dictates thereof; in all these Cases the Writings of Baron Swedenborg will carry with them no Conviction, and therefore it cannot be expected they will find any Reception.

SOPH. Well, Sir; taking it for granted, that Persons thus unqualified cannot

cannot discern any Evidence in Favour of the Writings in Question, will you be pleased to inform me, what Ground or Reason you have to suppose, that their Evidence will be admitted, as conclusive and convincing, by those who possess the Qualifications you mention?

PHIL. The Answer to your present Inquiry is not so easy as to several of your former Questions; for in reading a Book, (of the Truth of which we are fully convinced ourselves whilst we are reading,) it is not always an easy Matter to recollect all the particular Arguments, Reasonings, and Motives, which operated at that Time to produce Conviction in the Reader's Mind. This I have found by Experience to be singularly the Case in Regard to the Theological Writings of Baron Swedenborg, every Page whereof brought with it to my own Mind (whilst reading) some additional

ditional Confirmation of some preceding Truths not before fully admitted or thoroughly understood, and which it is impossible either fully to recollect, or explain to any other Person. Nevertheless, there are a few *general* Points of Doctrine contained and explained in those Writings, which have left a more than ordinary Impression on my Mind, and which I cannot help thinking must appear satisfactory and convincing to every sober serious Christian of the Character above described.

SOPH. What are they?

PHIL. The Doctrine concerning the *Christian Lord*, concerning the *Sacred Scriptures*, and concerning a *truly Christian Life*.

SOPH. Pray, Sir, may I ask, What is the particular Doctrine contained in these Writings concerning the Christian Lord?

PHIL.

PHIL. You are not ignorant of the divided Sentiments of the Christian World at this Day on this Subject; how some believe *Jesus Christ* to be God, but then not the *only* God, making him only a *second Person* in the Divine Trinity, and acknowledging at the same Time *two other Persons*, the Father and the Holy Ghost, whom they conceive and speak of as distinct from *Jesus Christ*. Thus, according to their Creed, the Christian Lord and Redeemer *Jesus Christ* is only a Kind of *mediatory* or *intercessory* God, whilst God the Father is regarded as the God with whom he *mediates* and *intercedes*, and God the Holy Ghost as the God who operates in Consequence of such *Mediation* and *Intercession*. Others again will not allow to the Christian Lord and Redeemer the Character and Attributes of *Divinity*: Such are the *Arians* and *Socinians*: The former

former assign him a Place indeed infinitely above all other created Beings, but yet infinitely below the Creator; thus they refuse him Divine Honours, and address all their Worship and Adoration to God the Father, regarding *Jesus Christ* only as his great Vicegerent in Heaven and Earth, invested with a temporary Authority for executing the Purposes of the Divine Administration: The latter, viz. the *Socinians*, degrade the Christian Redeemer still lower than the *Arians*, by divesting him, not only of his Divinity, but of all Power and Authority superior to that of other holy and inspired Men; they allow him indeed to have been an extraordinary Prophet, and to have been endowed with *miraculous Powers*, as they allow to have been the Case with *Moses*, *Elijah*, *Elisba*, and others; but then they do not believe him to have differed from other Men in
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any other Respects than these. The Faith of almost all Christians at this Day may be comprehended, I believe, under one or other of these three Formulas above mentioned. But in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, we are presented with a Christian Creed differing essentially from all these: You will there find, in Opposition to the *Arians* and *Socinians*, the Divinity of the Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* asserted and proved from a deep scriptural Ground; and in Contradiction to the first-mentioned Opinion, you will see the Divinity of the same Lord maintained in it's undivided *Unity*, whilst it is clearly demonstrated, from an endless Variety of Texts both in the Old and New Testament, that the *Jesus* of the Christians is the *Jehovah* of the Jews, or, in other Words, that the Lord *Jesus Christ* is the manifested *Jehovah-Father*.

SOPH.

SOPH. But how will you reconcile this Doctrine with the Doctrine of a *Trinity*, as generally taught and received throughout the Christian World?

PHIL. With the Doctrine of a *Trinity*, as generally apprehended, it is not reconcilable; but with the *Scripture* Doctrine of a *Trinity* it is perfectly so. Whilst, for Instance, you suppose the *Trinity* in the Godhead to consist of *three distinct Persons*, each whereof is a self-subsisting God, having *separate Offices*, and exercising *separate Operations*, it is not possible to reconcile this Idea with that of *Jesus* being *Jehovah*, any more than it is reconcilable with the Divine Unity: But if, instead of this Idea, you adopt the genuine scriptural Idea of a *Trinity*, viz. that of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, Nothing is more easy than to reconcile this Idea with that of the Divinity of the Christian Re-

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deemer as stated in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, whilst by *Father* is understood the *essential Divine* Principle in the Lord *Jesus*, by *Son* the *Human* Principle therewith essentially and intimately united, and by *Holy Ghost* the *Divine Proceeding* Principle, or Operation, as resulting from the Union of the other two Principles, all forming together One GOD-MAN, just as Soul, Body, and Operations form one human Man. This is perfectly agreeable to the Doctrine generally received in the Christian Church, where it is asserted, that "although the Lord Jesus Christ
"be God and Man, yet he is not two
"but one Christ; one altogether, not
"by Confusion of Substance, but by
"Unity of Person; for as the reasonable
"Soul and Flesh is one Man, so God
"and Man is one Christ:"* And in
this

* See the Athanasian Creed.

this Case, you have a full and complete Trinity in the *One Divine Person* of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, whereby both the Unity and Trinity of the Godhead are preserved inviolable, and at the same Time the Divinity and Humanity of the Christian Lord are acknowledged. Numberless Difficulties urged against the Doctrine of a Trinity by modern *Unitarians*, and numberless Perplexities resulting from the same Doctrine as explained by modern *Trinitarians*, are hereby removed; whilst at the same Time the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament are shewn to harmonize herein with each other, and to bear a joint Witness to this great and eternal Gospel Truth, that the *Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* was *God manifest in the Flesh*, the *Jehovah* of the Jews, the *Creator* of all Worlds, and the *Father* of all Creatures, made Man, according

to these his own Declarations, "I and
 "my Father are One."* "Believe me
 "that I am in the Father and the Father
 "in me."† "He that hath seen me,
 "hath seen the Father."‡ "Father, all
 "Mine are Thine, and all Thine are
 "Mine."|| &c. &c. &c.

SOPH. A *Trinity of Persons* then is
 rejected in the Writings of Baron Swe-
 denborg?

PHIL. Yes, if by a *Trinity of Persons*
 you understand three distinct Beings of
 distinct Offices, Powers, and Operations;
 but if by a *Trinity of Persons* you under-
 stand three distinct Essences, Principles,
 or Characters, as existing together in
 the One Person of *the Lord Jesus Christ*,
 viz. the *Divine* Essence, Principle, or
 Character, in and by Virtue of which
 He is called *Father* or *Creator*; and
 the

† John x. 30.

‡ John xiv. 9. xii. 45.

‡ John xiv. 11.

|| John xvii. 10.

the *Human* Effence, Principle, or Character, in and by Virtue of which He is called *Son* and *Redeemer*; and lastly the *Proceeding* Effence, Principle, or Character, in and by Virtue of which He is called the *Holy Ghost*, the *Sanctifier*, and *Regenerator*: According to this Sense of the Word *Person* (which by the Way appears to be it's genuine primitive Sense) a Trinity of Persons is not rejected in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, but on the contrary is proved to be a scriptural and rational Idea.

SOPH. But does not this Idea of the Christian Redeemer and of the Divine Trinity militate against the commonly received Doctrine of *Atonement*?

PHIL. May I ask, Sir, what is the commonly received Doctrine of Atonement, to which you allude?

SOPH. I mean the Satisfaction of Christ's Merits, in Consequence of his

bitter Sufferings and Death, whereby, it is asserted, the Wrath of God towards sinful Man was appeased; the Price of Redemption paid; the Debt, which Man had contracted through Transgression, discharged; and Man, who was before regarded as a condemned Criminal, was thus reconciled unto an offended and heretofore angry, but now reconciled, God.

PHIL. This Idea of Atonement, in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, is shewn to be altogether unscriptural and unreasonable, neither reconcilable with the Attributes of the Deity, nor with the Nature of that Sin on Man's Part, which made such an Atonement necessary. Understand, however, that *an Atonement* is not denied in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, but on the contrary is asserted in all it's Fulness and Reality. It is only *this unscriptural and unreasonable Idea* of an Atonement which is

is set aside, whilst in the Place thereof you will see adopted the following truly scriptural, edifying, and rational Idea, viz. that there was an infinite Merit, Virtue, and Efficacy in the Sufferings and Death of Christ, but that the Merit, Virtue, and Efficacy thereof consisted, not in changing the Disposition of God towards Man from Wrath to Love and Mercy, because that ever was, and ever must needs be, unchangeably, the same Divine Desire of blessing his Creatures; but in changing the State of Man, by removing from him the Powers of Hell and Darknes wherewith he was infested in Consequence of Transgression, and by bringing near to him the Divine and heavenly Powers of Goodness and Truth in the Person and Spirit of the blessed *Jesus*, the manifested *God and Saviour*, whereby the Infirmities and Corruptions of human Nature might be approached, reached, and wrought upon,

and

and every penitent Believer might be thus placed in a State and Capacity of arising out of all the Evils which Sin had given Birth to, and of becoming thus again a Child of God, through a real Renewal and Regeneration of all the Parts, Powers, and Principles of his Life, both in Soul and Body.

SOPH. I wish, Sir, you would be kind enough to explain yourself further on this Subject, for I fear I do not rightly comprehend your Meaning.

PHIL. According to the *commonly received* Doctrine of Atonement, which you have just now stated, it must be plain to see, if you will attentively examine it, that the Nature of Sin, wherein that Doctrine is grounded, is most unhappily mistaken, being considered only as Somewhat of Guilt and Offence on the Part of the Creature, removable by an arbitrary Act of Divine Mercy and Forgiveness, like what we see takes
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Place at an human Tribunal, where an arbitrary Prince absolveth from Penalty and Punishment whomsoever he pleaseth. You will discover further, if you examine the Doctrine still more attentively, that it originates likewise in a mistaken Idea of the Nature of God, as if he imputed Trespas or Guilt to any one, was wrathful towards any, or needed Satisfaction to make Him propitious, and incline Him to be merciful, when yet He is, and declares Himself to be, the most essential Love and Mercy. Need I add, that the Doctrine, as commonly received and understood, is big also with this Absurdity, that it supposes it necessary for one God to have suffered and died in Order to appease another God? For thus it is argued by the Asserters of that Doctrine, that God the Son, the second Person in the blessed Trinity, came into the World, and suffered, and died, that
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by the Merits of his Sufferings and Death he might satisfy the offended Justice of his Father, and incline him thus to be merciful to his guilty Creatures. I should be very sorry to put an uncharitable or mistaken Construction either upon the Grounds or Nature of the Doctrine as above stated; but these are the great Objections which arise in my own Mind from an impartial View of it, and which have arisen also in the Minds of many others, so as to excite an utter Repugnance to it's Reception: And hence too many, alas! have been led to conceive Prejudices against Christianity itself, as if that pure and holy Religion was founded on Sentiments so very contradictory to sound Reason and the common Sense of Mankind. Herein therefore, I confess for myself, I can never be enough thankful to the Divine Mercy for the Light thrown on this important

important Subject in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, whereby all the Difficulties and Errors of these mistaken Ideas are removed, and the Doctrine of Atonement is presented in a Point of View at once most scriptural, rational, simple, and edifying, and altogether consistent with the Truth and Purity of a Religion originating in the God of infinite Mercy and Wisdom. For thus it is argued in those Writings, and the Argument is enforced both by Scripture and Reason: The Sin of Mankind was what alone made Atonement necessary; but the Sin of Mankind consisted in a Departure from God and his Laws of Order and Uprightness, and a consequent Fall into Disorder and Unrighteousness, whence came Disease and Death to the human Soul or Spirit: Nothing therefore could possibly prove or constitute an Atonement for Sin, but what had a
Tendency

Tendency to lead Man out of the Disease and Disorder thereby occasioned, and restore him to Health, Order, and Uprightness, through a Return to, and Conjunction again with his God. This was all the Atonement or Satisfaction the God of Mercy required, because it was all that was necessary for the eternal Well-being of his Creatures. But how now was this Satisfaction to be obtained? The Creatures had immerfed themselves in innumerable Evils through Sin, and had thereby joined themselves in Confederacy with the infernal Powers of Darknefs, who have their Abodes in all Man's Evils, and whose Empire was thereby become so powerful on Earth, as to threaten a total Destruction of the Human Race. The Creatures again had by Sin so separated themselves from the God of Purity, that they could no longer see him, approach unto, or have any
internal

internal Communication with him, and yet without internal Communication with God, it was impossible they could be restored to spiritual Health, Order, and Uprightness. On both these Accounts, therefore, it was become absolutely necessary that God himself should come down amongst Men, by taking upon Him the Human Nature, and thus procure for Himself the Satisfaction He required of saving his otherwise lost Creatures; first, by fighting against and removing the Powers of Darkness from Man, and this was to be done according to Divine Order; secondly, by glorifying, or essentially uniting Himself with the Human Nature which He assumed, in, by, and through which his repenting and returning Creatures might for ever see, approach unto, and have Conjunction with Him, and He with them. This Satisfaction, and the Pro-

cess of obtaining it, is thus described in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, "The Lord from Eternity, who is *Jehovah*, came into the World, that he might subdue the Hells, and glorify his Humanity; and without Him no Flesh could have been saved; and all will be saved who believe in Him, and live a Life conformable to his Commandments. Inasmuch as this could only be effected by Means of the Temptations wherewith he suffered his Humanity to be assaulted, even to the last and most extreme of all, which was his Passion on the Cross; therefore he endured that Process of Suffering."* The same is still more particularly described in the following Words, "*Jehovah* God is essential Love, and essential Wisdom; or He is essential Good, and essential Truth; and

* See True Christian Religion, n. 2.

" and as to his Divine Truth, which is
 " the Word, and which was God with
 " God, He came down and took upon
 " Him Human Nature, for the Purpose
 " of restoring to Order all Things
 " which were in Heaven, and which
 " were in Hell, and which were in the
 " Church; inasmuch as at that Time
 " the Power of Hell prevailed over the
 " Power of Heaven, and on Earth the
 " Power of Evil prevailed over the
 " Power of Good; in Consequence
 " whereof a total Destruction and Dam-
 " nation were at Hand, and threatened
 " every Creature. This impending
 " Destruction and Damnation *Jehovah*
 " God removed by his Humanity, which
 " was Divine Truth, and thus he re-
 " deemed both Angels and Men; and
 " afterwards He united in his Huma-
 " nity Divine Truth with Divine Good,
 " or Divine Wisdom with Divine Love,

" and
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"and thus returned into his Divinity;
 "in which he existed from Eternity;
 "together with and in his glorified
 "Humanity."*

SOPH. The Idea then of Atonement and Satisfaction suggested in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg is, that God satisfied Himself, and Himself made Atonement for the Sin of Man; by taking upon Him the Infirmities of human Nature, and suffering thus in the Flesh, in Order to remove Evils and the Powers of Darkness from Man; and at the same Time, and by the same Process, making Himself visible, known; and for ever approachable to and by his Creatures in the Humanity which He assumed and made Divine?

PHIL. This is the Idea suggested in those Writings, and it is according to this Sense that all those Passages are

* See True Christian Religion, n. 3.

understood, which speak of the Merits of Christ's Sufferings and Blood-shedding, as where it is said, "By his Stripes we are healed," (&c. &c.) not implying any Change wrought thereby in the Nature of God himself, only so far as He was brought *nearer* as it were unto his Creatures, in the human Nature which he assumed and glorified; but implying a very extraordinary Change wrought in the State and Condition of the Creatures, in that they were, by this Process of Christ's Suffering in his human Nature, put into a Capacity of being delivered from the Bondage and Death of Sin, and obtaining Conjunction with their incarnate God, and thus arising out of Disease and Disorder into the Regions of spiritual Health, Order, Peace, and eternal Blessedness.

SOPH. Well, Sir, I think I begin now to apprehend your Meaning; and

Alas!

the Subject of Atonement, and Satisfaction (which, I confess, always appeared heretofore perplexing and unsatisfactory to my Mind) now assumes a new Form, which I can look upon with much Delight, as exhibiting clearer Views of the unchangeable Nature of the Divine Mercy on God's Part, and of Sin on the Part of Man; and it will be my own Fault if I do not profit by it in my Life and Conversation; for surely the Doctrine thus opened and explained becomes most edifying. But, my dear Sir, you must still bear with me a little farther, and excuse the Dulness of my Apprehension, whilst new Doubts arise in my Mind from what you have told me: I have always been taught to look upon *Jesus Christ*, not only as making an *Atonement* or *Satisfaction* for Sin, according to the Idea I just now mentioned to you, but likewise as being the *Sinner's Advocate*,

Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor, with the Father, for so he is called in Holy Scripture, and is accordingly represented as *sitting on the right Hand of God*; and agreeable to this Representation, I have always in my Prayers been accustomed to approach the Father in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, believing that my Addresses were accepted only thro' his *Mediation and Intercession*, as an *Advocate on the right Hand* of his Father: How now shall I reconcile these Notions and Practices with what you have taught me to believe, from the Writings of Baron Swedénborg, concerning the *Lord Jesus Christ*, as being the *One Only God*?

PHIL. You have been accustomed then to regard *Jesus Christ* as an *Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor*, and as *sitting on God's right Hand*, according to the commonly received Sense of those Words, when applied to Men here below, and

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to human Transactions between one Man and another?

SOPH. I have; for I find those Words applied to him in Holy Scripture.

PHIL. But you find *Jesus Christ* called also in Holy Scripture a *Vine*, a *Door*, a *Lion*, and a *Lamb*, and see him described as *sitting on a Throne in the Midst of seven golden Candlesticks*; and do you therefore regard Him as a *Vine*, a *Door*, a *Lion*, and a *Lamb*, and as *sitting thus on a Throne in the Midst of seven golden Candlesticks*, according to the common and literal Acceptation of those Words?

SOPH. No; I suppose that those Names and Figures are applied to Him only in a *figurative* Sense, to denote Divine Qualities, Properties, and States respecting Him, of which the *literal* Names and Figures are expressive Signs.

PHIL. You are certainly right; and why

why then cannot you conceive, as consistently and agreeably to the Truth, in Regard to those other Names and Characters of *Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor, sitting at the right Hand of God*, which are no more applicable to the Lord *Jesus Christ*, according to the *literal* Sense in which they are generally understood, than the Names of *Vine, Door, Lion, and Lamb, or the sitting on a Throne in the Midst of seven Candlesticks*, but which yet are most strictly and properly applicable to Him in a *figurative* Sense?

SOPH. As how?

PHIL. As applied to denote what *Jesus Christ* himself hath taught respecting Himself, when he saith, "No Man cometh unto the Father but by Me:" "By Me if any Man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find Pasture." †

SOPH.

SOPH. Pray, explain yourself.

PHIL. Have you not already seen, how the eternal *Father Jehovah*, in the Person of *Jesus Christ*, took upon him the Human Nature, in Order therein, and thereby, to make Himself known to and approachable by his sinful Creatures, who could not otherwise have approached Him, or been approached by Him, whilst he remained in his pure, Divine, unmanifested Essence?

SOPH. I have.

PHIL. You have seen also how the Divine Essence, or *Jehovah*, is now eternally and essentially united with the Human Essence, and the Human with the Divine, according to the Lord's own Declaration, "I and my Father, are One:"* "Father, all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine:"† And according to the Declaration of St. Paul, "In

* John x. 30.

† John xvii. 10.

“ In Him (Jesus Christ) dwelleth all
 “ the Fulness of the Godhead bodily :” *
 And also according to what is ex-
 pressed in the Athanasian Creed, “ As
 “ the reasonable Soul and Flesh is one
 “ Man, so God and Man is one Christ.”

SOPH. True.

PHIL. Cannot you then clearly hence
 perceive, why *Jesus Christ* is called an
Advocate, a *Mediator*, and an *Intercessor*,
 and described as sitting on *the right*
Hand of God; and is not only so called
 and described, but really *is so*, in the
 full and true Signification of those Ex-
 pressions; denoting, that henceforth none
 can approach unto, or have Communi-
 cation with, the Divine Essence, or
Jehovah the Father, but in, through,
 and by the Human Essence, in which
 He the Father dwells *bodily*, and which
 He hath made One with Himself; just
 as,

* Coloss. ii. 9.

as, in an human Way of Speaking, none can approach unto, or have Communication with the Soul of Man, but in, by, and through the Body wherein the Soul dwelleth, and by which it is made manifest. As therefore the human Body is, properly speaking, the *Medium*, or *interceding* Principle, whereby the Soul is approached, and whereby also it approaches and operates, so the glorified Body, or Humanity of *Jesus Christ*, is now the *Medium* or *interceding* Principle, whereby the Divinity is approached, and whereby also it approaches and operates upon sinful Man, to restore him to Order, Uprightness, and Happiness. And in this Sense the Humanity may properly be said to be an *Advocate* with the Father, inasmuch as having passed to such Divine Union through Suffering and Trial, the Sinner who approaches thereto receives hereby Confidence of Help,

Help, Acceptance, and Mercy, according to the Tenor of those Words of the Apostle, "In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."* And in this Sense also the Son of Man is *truly seated on the right Hand* of the Father; for the Humanity of *Jesus Christ* being exalted to a full and perfect Union with the Divinity, hath thereby acquired *Omnipotence*, which is indeed the *right Hand* of God, according to the Lord's own Declaration after his Resurrection, "All Power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth."†

SOPH. Sir, I sincerely thank you for the *full Satisfaction* you have afforded me on this very important and edifying Subject, and I trust that henceforth I shall trouble you with no further Doubts and Difficulties on this Head, but shall

H regard

* Heb. ii. 18.

† Matt. xxviii. 18.

as, in an human Way of Speaking, none can approach unto, or have Communication with the Soul of Man, but in, by, and through the Body wherein the Soul dwelleth, and by which it is made manifest. As therefore the human Body is, properly speaking, the *Medium*, or *interceding* Principle, whereby the Soul is approached, and whereby also it approaches and operates, so the glorified Body, or Humanity of *Jesus Christ*, is now the *Medium* or *interceding* Principle, whereby the Divinity is approached, and whereby also it approaches and operates upon sinful Man, to restore him to Order, Uprightness, and Happiness. And in this Sense the Humanity may properly be said to be an *Advocate* with the Father, inasmuch as having passed to such Divine Union through Suffering and Trial, the Sinner who approaches thereto receives hereby Confidence of Help,

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H regard

* Heb. ii. 18.

† Matt. xxviii. 18.

regard it as an extraordinary Testimony in Favour of the Writings in Question, that the *Name, Nature, Office, and Character* of the Christian Lord and Redeemer are therein thus exalted, and explained in a Manner so very worthy of the Divine Wisdom, and so very consistently with the Sacred Scriptures, and at the same Time set in a Point of View likely to operate so very profitably on the Lives of Christians, by leading them to right scriptural Notions of the great Object and End of their Faith and Worship.—May I now intreat you to proceed to the other Doctrine you mentioned, viz. concerning the *Holy Scriptures*, which you said had *left an extraordinary Impression on your Mind*, and which you thought must needs appear satisfactory to every sober and serious Christian, and a convincing Testimony concerning the Writings of Baron Swedenborg,

denborg, as *bearing a faithful Witness to the Truth*. How am I to regard this Testimony?

PHIL. You yourself, and all other serious Christians, acknowledge the Holy Scriptures to be *divinely inspired*, and you reverence the holy Record accordingly.

SOPH. We do.

PHIL. Should any one attempt to prove that they were *not* divinely inspired, and that you ought *not* to reverence them; what Judgment would you, or any other serious Christian, form of such a Person?

SOPH. We should certainly say that he was an Enemy to the Truth, and that he *bare a false Witness* against it.

PHIL. And supposing he should proceed further, to vilify and profane the holy Books, accounting them not only *not* divinely inspired, but teaching that

they were full of Absurdities, Inconsistencies, and Contradictions; what would you think in this Case?

SOPH. We should surely think still worse of the Person, and account him a still greater Enemy to the Truth, and a *false Witness* in a still greater Degree.

PHIL. But if another was to confirm your own just and pious Sentiments concerning the Holy Scriptures, as being divinely inspired, and lead you to a higher Reverence for them than you entertained before; what would you, or any other serious Christian, say of such a Person?

SOPH. Certainly that he was a *Friend to the Truth*, and that he *bore a true Witness* concerning it.

PHIL. And supposing that he should proceed further, to exalt and venerate the holy Books, accounting them not only divinely inspired, but also pointing

ing out the *Nature* of such Divine Inspiration, and shewing wherein it consisted, and where it resided; and supposing further that, in so doing, he should be enabled to reconcile many *apparent Absurdities, Inconsistencies, and Contradictions*; bring to Light an Infinity of precious and profitable Truths, which had before been concealed; make the Whole to harmonize with each Part, and each Part with the Whole; convince you that the *Fulness* of the Divine Will and Wisdom was contained therein, and consequently that every Page, Line, Word, and Letter, not only originated with God, but also was full of God, in Conjunction with God, bare Witness of God, and led to God; what Sentiments would you, and other serious Christians, entertain in this Case?

SOPH. We should most assuredly greatly love and respect such a Person,

call him a *greater* Friend to the Truth, and have a higher Opinion of his Testimony.

PHIL. Then, it seems, you, and all other serious Christians, estimate a Person's Credit as a *Witness to the Truth*, according to the Reverence he expresses for the Holy Scriptures as being divinely inspired, together with the Views he has of the Nature of such Inspiration, and of the Contents of the sacred Books?

SOPH. It seems reasonable so to do.

PHIL. Give me Leave then to observe, from your own Confession, that you, and all other serious Christians, must needs highly estimate the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, in this Respect, as being a *most faithful Witness to the Truth*. For surely no other Person did ever express a higher Reverence for the sacred Writings, or point out so clearly their *Divine* Original, and the
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Nature of their Divine Inspiration, or open and elucidate their heavenly Contents with so much Perspicuity, Harmony, and Consistence, all tending so immediately and powerfully to the Reader's Edification. He not only venerates their Divine Authority on all Occasions, therein grounding, and thereby confirming every Doctrine which he delivers; he was not only well read in the Sacred Oracles, almost above the Example of any other Person, in the present or former Times; but he likewise asserts, and proves indisputably, that there is contained in the holy Books an *internal spiritual* Sense heretofore little known, to which the *outward literal* Sense serves as a Basis, or Receptacle, answering or corresponding thereto in a *figurative, allegorical, or symbolical* Way, as a Type answers to it's Archetype, or as a Representative to the Thing represented.

scnted. He shews that in this internal Sense consists the *Spirituality* and *Divinity* of the sacred Writings, whereby they *essentially* differ from all other Books whatsoever and that by Virtue of this Sense they are adapted, not only to the Use of Men on Earth, but of Angels in Heaven, containing the great eternal Laws of that Order, whereby the Heavens are formed, preserved, and governed, and whereby Man is reformed, regenerated, and restored to heavenly Order; being thus accommodated to the Instruction and Perfecting of all Intelligences from the highest to the lowest. And that the Importance of his Testimony on this Subject might not rest on mere Assertion only, he was gifted with the extraordinary Faculty of opening and unfolding this internal or spiritual Sense of the Whole of the Books of *Genesis*, *Exodus*, and the *Revelation*,

lation, and occasionally of various Passages both of the Old and New Testament, which he hath done in a Manner so edifying and convincing, particularly in his Work entitled *Arcana Cœlestia*, that I am persuaded every well-disposed Christian, who acknowledges the Divine Inspiration of the Holy Word, must needs be at once astonished, delighted, and instructed by it.

SOPH. Pray, Sir, have not other Writers, both ancient and modern, maintained in like Manner the Existence of a *spiritual* or *internal* Sense in the Sacred Scriptures? If I recollect right, I have been told that some of the ancient Fathers were of this Opinion.

PHIL. They were; particularly *Origen*, who abounds much in allegorical Interpretations of the literal or historical Parts of the Bible. There have not been wanting also spiritual Writers
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in modern Times, who have had extraordinary Views of the same Nature, and have been enabled to open the sacred Books in the Way of much Edification and Comfort, according to this their hidden or mystical Signification.* But I will venture to say, there is none, either

* See particularly Dr. Henry More's *Cabbala*, containing a spiritual, moral, and philosophical Explication of the three first Chapters of Genesis. See also Bishop Hall's *Contemplations*, and Bromley's *Journeys of the Children of Israel through the Wilderness*; and in our own Times, Dr. Horne's *Commentary on the Psalms*, and the Rev. Mr. Jones's *Lectures on the figurative Language of the Scriptures*; all which Works are earnestly recommended to the Reader's Perusal, as tending to open and form the Mind to edifying Conceptions of the hidden Wisdom and Sanctities of the Holy Word. To these might be added a long List of German and French Divines, all of them Persons of acknowledged Piety and Learning, who bear the same Testimony.

either ancient or modern, who was ever so wonderfully gifted with a Talent of this Sort as Baron Swedenborg; and I only wish you to read his Interpretation of the Books of *Genesis*, *Exodus*, and the *Revelation*, to judge for yourself in this Matter. In Regard to my own particular Case, I am bound to acknowledge my infinite Obligations to the Divine Providence, for having brought me acquainted with Writings, which have taught me such a Veneration for my Bible as I confess I never felt before, and have besides opened its holy and hidden Contents in a Manner so entirely satisfactory and edifying; and though you know I am not naturally of a warm Temper, yet when I reflect on the Ideas suggested in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg concerning the *Holy Word*, what it is, and what it contains; especially when I am enabled to see in
some

some Degree into the heavenly Contents, and am made sensible of their Divine Sanctity; I can never think or speak on the Subject but with a pleasing, and, I trust, profitable Mixture of Warmth and Delight; and I consider it such an Argument in Favour of the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, as no Miracles whatever could supply.

SOPH. Sir, you have touched a tender String, and inspired me with a most ardent Longing to look into the Writings in Question; for it has ever been my own private Opinion, though I scarce knew whence it came, or in what it was grounded, that there was a hidden Mystery contained in the Letter of Scripture, which few, if any, were acquainted with; and I always thought that the Psalmist meant Something of this when he says, “Open thou mine
“ Eyes, that I may see the *wondrous*
“ Things

“ Things of thy Law ;” * for surely if the Divine Law had contained no *wondrous* Things, but what were visible in the Letter, there would have been no Occasion to pray unto God for Illumination to discover and see them.

PHIL. You are certainly right ; and the same Thing is made equally manifest by what is written of our Lord after his Resurrection, where it is said, “ Then “ opened He their Understandings, that “ they might understand the Scrip- “ tures ;” † for the Disciples, before this Time, had doubtless frequently read and understood the *Letter* of the Scriptures, but for Want of having their *Understandings opened*, they had not seen into or understood the *Spirit* thereof, that is, the spiritual Things contained under the Letter, which had all of them Relation to our Lord and to his Kingdom,

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* Psalm cxix. 18.

† Luke xxiv. 45.

as he himself plainly declares in the preceding Verse: It is clear also, from St. Paul's allegorical Interpretation of some Passages in the Old Testament,* that he had his Eyes opened to see into an internal Sense of the Sacred History, which he therefore calls *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom*: † And therefore there is Nothing of Novelty in the Sentiment; the only Wonder is, that the Holy Writings have not been more generally attended to and regarded in this View, as being the *real Word of God*; for surely common Sense and Reason must see, that if they are the Word of God, they must needs contain the whole Will and Wisdom of God; and yet it is equally plain that this Divine Will and Wisdom are not manifest in the mere Letter and History,

* See particularly Gal. iv. 24 to 31.

† 1 Cor. ii. 7.

of Consequence they must reside in the internal or spiritual Sense.

SOPH. Well, Sir, I believe I shall lose no Time in making myself acquainted with the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, which promise such a rich Source of Edification and Entertainment as you speak of; and at present I shall be glad if you will acquaint me with the *Doctrine of Life* recommended in these Writings, which you mentioned as a further Testimony in the Author's Favour. And first, What am I to understand by your Expression, *the Doctrine of Life*?

PHIL. I mean by it a Description or Exposition of a *truly Christian Life*, or such a Life as leads to the Kingdom of Heaven.

SOPH. Are not all agreed that a *truly Christian Life* consists in keeping the Commandments of *Jesus Christ*, and

that this is the only Way which leads to Heaven? Can there be any other *Doctrine of Life* besides this?

PHIL. It may seem as if all were agreed in this Point, and as if it were impossible they could disagree; and yet so it has unhappily come to pass, that there is amongst Christian Teachers, at this Day, a total Disagreement on this Subject. Thus you will find some insisting on *Charity alone* as a Preparative for Heaven, some on *Faith alone*, and others on *good Works alone*. Some, you will observe, recommend a *moral Life* separate from a *spiritual Life*; others fall into the contrary Extreme, and exalt a *spiritual Life* separate from a *moral Life*. Some again maintain, that Man is fitted for Heaven merely through the *Operations of Divine Grace*, without any *Regard to his own Exertions*; whilst others lay all the Stress upon *human Exertions*,

ertions, without any Regard to *Divine Grace* and *super-natural Aids*; not to mention a Variety of other Sentiments, in which the Christian World at this Day is most miserably divided, so that it is become difficult for a simple Mind to discover the Truth, and still more difficult to adhere to it when discovered.

SOPH. And pray, Sir, what new Light is thrown upon this Subject in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg?

PHIL. No *new* Light at all, but only that which *was from the Beginning*, unless it may be called *new* to expose the Errors which had crept into the Church through a Departure from the *old Commandment*. In the Writings therefore of Baron Swedenborg, you will see a clear and full Refutation of all that Doctrine which would teach, that Man may be saved either by *Charity alone*, or

by *Faith alone*, or by *good Works alone*; or by a *moral Life* separate from a *spiritual Life*, or by a *spiritual Life* separate from a *moral Life*; or by *Divine Grace* without *Regard to his own free Exertions*, or by *his own free Exertions* without *Regard to Divine Grace*. Having thus taught what a *Christian Life* is *not*, the Author next proceeds to shew, and demonstrate from the *Holy Scriptures*, what it really is; and his *Doctrine* on the interesting Subject may be reduced to the following Summary. A truly *Christian Life* is a Life which leads to *Heaven*, and to be led to *Heaven* is the same Thing as to be formed in the *Image, Likeness, and Spirit of Heaven*, according to our *Lord's Declaration*, "*The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.*" A truly *Christian Life*, therefore, is that which tends most perfectly to open and form in *Man* the *Image, Likeness, and Spirit*

Spirit of Heaven: But whereas Man consists of different Parts or Principles, each of them capable, in it's Degree, of receiving this heavenly Image, Likeness, and Spirit, therefore this heavenly Image, Likeness, and Spirit cannot be fully opened and formed, unless it be opened and formed in each Part or Principle. These Parts or Principles are in general the *Will*, the *Understanding*, and the *Act* or *Operation* thence proceeding. A truly Christian Life therefore hath Respect to these three several Parts or Principles of Man, to open and form each of them according to the Image, Likeness, and Spirit of Heaven: The *Will* is thus opened and formed by *Charity*, with all it's heavenly attendant Graces and Virtues: The *Understanding* is thus opened and formed by *Faith*, with all the bright Knowledges and Perceptions of holy Truth thereto appertaining:

ing: And lastly, the *Act* or *Operation* is so formed by *good Works*, or an obedient Practice of the Things which Charity and Faith dictate. A truly Christian Life therefore, or a Life which leads to Heaven, is a Life of *Charity*, of *Faith*, and of *good Works* conjointly: If the Heart and Lungs are separated, all bodily Action ceases; in like Manner if you separate any one of these three Constituents of a Christian Life from the other two, they all perish; but being joined together, they tend to each other's Stability and Perfection, and thereby to the Stability and Perfection of all the Parts and Principles of Man, and this in the Degree in which each is cultivated, and brought into due Subordination.

SOPH. Pray, Sir, in what Sense do you here use the Terms *Charity* and *Faith*? It seems to me that the Signification you annex to these Terms is
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Somewhat different from what is generally received.

PHIL. *Charity*, according to the Sense in which it is understood and applied in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, is the Divine Life of holy Love, proceeding from the Lord God the Saviour Jesus Christ, and his holy Word, operative in Man's Will, whereby he is led earnestly to forsake all Evil, and to love God and Goodness above all Things, and his Neighbour as himself, and to live a Life according to such Love, fulfilling faithfully, uprightly, and conscientiously all the relative Duties of his Rank, Station, and Calling: And *Faith*, according to the Sense in which it is understood and applied in the same Writings, is the Divine Life of holy and pure Wisdom, or Truth, from the same Lord God and Saviour, and his holy Word, opened and operative in Man's Understanding, where-

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by he is led to reject all Persuasions which are contrary to heavenly Truth, and to confirm such as are agreeable thereto, and thereby to attain a clear and distinct Knowledge and Perception in his Mind of the Nature of Good and Evil, with their several Degrees and Qualities; and also the Natures, Measures, and Orders of the several Duties thence resulting; so that as *Charity* is the essential *Life* of *Faith*, *Faith* on it's Part is the essential *Light* of *Charity*, and each is necessary for the other's Existence, Preservation, Qualification, and Operation. It is proper however to be observed, that in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, *Charity* is always considered as having the Pre-eminence over *Faith*, that is; Purity of Will and of Life is considered as infinitely surpassing all speculative Knowledge and mere Contemplation of holy Things; Nevertheless, such speculative
Know-

Knowledge, when grounded in the genuine Truth of God's holy Word, is shewn to have it's great and manifold Uses, both as leading to the Discovery of genuine Charity, and as tending to confirm, qualify, exalt, and perfect it when discovered.

SOPH. In what Sense then is a *moral* Life considered by Baron Swedenborg?

PHIL. As originating in genuine Charity and Faith; and being Charity and Faith in Operation; or, in other Words, as consisting in *good Works*, proceeding from good Motives, and being thereby the *Basis and Foundation* of *spiritual Life* in Man, and therefore absolutely necessary to the Existence of his spiritual Life, just as it is necessary for the Existence of a House to have a Foundation to stand upon. This Kind of Morality is the *outward* Form of Charity and Faith, a *living* Form if it be

be joined with and grounded in Charity and Faith, but a *dead* Form if it be separated from and hath not Respect unto those heavenly Principles. It is further to be noted, that by the Conjunction of *Charity, Faith, and good Works*, Man's *Spiritual* and *moral* Life are joined together in *One*, and the *whole* Man is formed according to the Image, Likeness, and Spirit of Heaven.

SOPH. But you were speaking concerning the *Operations of Divine Grace*, and the *Exertions of Man*, as being confounded together by some Writers: Pray how are these Operations and Exertions reconciled in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg?

PHIL. The Charity and Faith, of which we have been speaking, as to their Origin, are shewn to be not of Man, but of God, inasmuch as *every good and perfect Gift is from above*; they
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are therefore God's continual *Gift* to Man, but then they are given to Man to *exercise freely as his own*, and whilst he so exerciseth them, and at the same Time acknowledgeth in Humiliation and Self-Abasement that they are from above, that is, from the *Lord God the Saviour*, they are then *imputed* and *appropriated* to him, and become his for Salvation and eternal Life; so that he liveth *freely* the Life of Charity and Faith, as if it was his *own proper* Life self-derived, and yet confesseth it at the same Time to be a Life derived from *another*, that is, from God; thus he acknowledgeth all Salvation to be purely the Effect of the *Divine Grace* and *Mercy*, yet not without the Concurrency of *his own free Exertions*, for it is by his own free Exertions that such Divine Grace and Mercy are implanted, and acquire Life, Formation, Sta-

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bility,

bility, and Operation in him; otherwise they must remain Things *foreign* to him, and can have no Place *in* him, not being received and exercised in his *Free-will*.

SOPH. Is the Doctrine of *Free-will* then maintained in these Writings?

PHIL. Yes, Sir, in all it's Purity and it's fullest Extent; and Nothing can be more edifying than what is said on this Subject, and the Manner of reconciling the *Free-will* of the Creature, with the *free Grace* and Operation of God.

SOPH. I have been told, that Baron Swedenborg held some particular Sentiments respecting the *Fall of Man*.

PHIL. His Sentiments are only *particular* in this, that he considers the present *fallen State of Man* not as an Effect of the Transgression of *one single Person alone*, but of *many Persons progressively through successive Generations*;
he

he shews that it consists in a Departure from the Love of the Creator and mutual Love, into the Love of Self, of the World, and of the Flesh, and of the various Concupiscencies therein originating, and this successively with Accumulation from Parents to their Posterity, each adding his own acquired to his hereditary Evils, and transmitting them so increased to his Progeny; so that Man's natural Life at this Day, which he derives hereditarily from his Parents, is become altogether evil and infernal; And herein is grounded the Necessity of deep *Repentance*, Faith in an *incarnate God*, and real *Regeneration* and *Renovation* in all the several human Properties and Principles, before Man can be meet for Admission into the Kingdom of Heaven, which is a Kingdom of pure disinterested Love and Charity.

SOPH. Is it not asserted in these Writings, that the *Rich* may enter into Heaven as easily as the *Poor*?

PHIL. Yes, Sir; the mere *Possession* of Riches, it is there shewn, will preclude none from the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the *Love* of Wealth, and not the mere *Possession* thereof, which is a Hindrance to Man's Salvation. These Writings clearly prove that it is Self-love and the Love of the World, that opposes and obstructs Man's Entrance into Heaven; because these two Kinds of Love are principally opposite to the pure Love of God and of our Neighbour, in which the Life of Heaven consists, and by which it is opened and formed in Man. In living therefore a Life which leads to Heaven, the chief Difficulty is, according to the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, to remove Self-love and the Love of the World,

with their various attendant Concupiscencies, so that the Love of God and neighbourly Love may have free Admission into the Heart, and Formation in the Life. It is therefore of no Consequence, in this Respect, whether a Man be *rich* or *poor* as to his *outward Circumstances*, because in either Case he may remain in Self-love and the Love of the World, or he may purify himself from those unclean Affections.

SOPH. There is no Call then in these Writings to any *Peculiarities of Life*?

PHIL. Only the Peculiarities of forsaking all inordinate selfish and worldly Love, and striving to become perfect in heavenly Love and Charity, by a faithful, sincere, and upright Discharge of all the relative Duties to which every one is called by Providence, in his respective Character, Station, Office, and

Employment, whether as a *King* or a *Subject*, a *Priest* or a *Layman*, a *Statesman* or a *Soldier*, a *Merchant* or a *Mechanic*: No *Austerities* are insisted on; but this Sacrifice of Self-love; and not *Renunciation of the World*, but this Renunciation of the inordinate Love of it. Nay, it is much insisted on, that a *Life in the World* is absolutely necessary to fit Man for Heaven, because otherwise he can have no Opportunities for the Exercise of Charity, and consequently no Opportunities for renouncing and expelling Self-love. But you must read for yourself on these important Subjects, for I find it impossible for me to acquaint you with a thousandth Part of all the Particulars relating to a *good Life*, which are declared in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and which have made me so frequently bless the Day, when I first set Eyes upon them.

SOPH.

SOPH. Well, Sir, from the Information you have been so kind to favour me with, I think I shall hardly be content to remain much longer a Stranger to the Writings in Question: For surely to recommend such *Purity of Life*, to express such Veneration for the *Holy Scriptures*, and to exalt so highly the *Person, Office, and Character* of the *Christian Redeemer*, are weighty Arguments in their Favour.

PHIL. Sir, they appear to me such Arguments as no sober, serious, and unprejudiced Christian can possibly withstand; and sure I am, that Nothing but Prejudice, arising either from the Evil of Life, or from Mis-information respecting the honourable Author's Character and his Works, could induce any one to forego all that Variety of curious Investigation and profitable Instruction with which they abound.

SOPH.

SOPH. I am much obliged to you for the Satisfaction you have afforded me in your Answers to my several Inquiries. Being called away by particular Business at present, I must take my Leave of you; but I hope at some future Time to have an Opportunity of renewing my Conversation with you on this very interesting Subject. Farewel.

DIALOGUE II.

SOPHRON.

MY dear *Philadelphus*, I am glad to take you again by the Hand, and have long wished for this Pleasure: Since our last Interview I have been led, in Consequence of the Encouragement you had given me, to look into some of the Theological Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and I think I have Reason to thank the Divine Providence for what I have found therein; for surely never was the Way to Heaven pointed out more plainly. The Doctrines you mentioned concerning the *Christian Lord*, concerning the *Holy Scriptures*, and concerning a
truly

truly Christian Life, are indeed most comfortable, animating, edifying, and convincing; and though I was highly pleased with what you related in Regard to each of those Doctrines, I am infinitely better satisfied since I have read and judged for myself, *drinking at the Fountain-Head*. There are also several other Doctrines, which have afforded me extraordinary Delight, and which appear to me strong *collateral* Evidences at least in Favour of the Author's Testimony: Such are the Doctrine of *Correspondence between Things spiritual and Things natural*, the Doctrine of *Influx*, the Doctrine of *Degrees*, the Doctrine of *Providence*, of *Imputation*, of *Regeneration*, of *Baptism*, and of the *Holy Supper*, with many others that do not immediately occur to my Remembrance, all tending to deliver the Mind from perverted Ideas of the Truth, and to establish

establish it in solid Principles both as to Persuasion and Practice. But, Sir, I find the Author declares himself to the World, not only as a *Teacher of Doctrines*, but also in the superior Character of a *Seer*, one that had his spiritual Senses open so as to hold Communication with the invisible World of Spirits and Angels; and that he makes known in his Writings several extraordinary Particulars in Relation to that World, and to the State of Man after Death when he enters therein. Now, Sir, though what he says on this Subject gives no Offence to my own Mind, but quite the contrary, serving to confirm my Belief in a future Life and it's great Realities, yet, as I am aware many will object to this Part of his Character, I should be glad to know your Sentiments on the Subject, both for the fuller Satisfaction of my

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own Mind, and also for the removing the Scruples of others.

PHIL. This Subject is so fully treated of in two excellent Prefaces, written by a pious and learned Clergyman of the Church of England, and prefixed, one to the *Treatise on Heaven and Hell*, and the other to the *Treatise on Influx*, translated by him from the Latin of Baron Swedenborg, that I think no candid Person can wish for any further Satisfaction in Regard to this Part of the Baron's Character; the Perusal of which I beg Leave to recommend, not only to you, but to every other Person who feels disposed to read the Baron's Writings. It is not, however, to be expected, that a carnal and careless World will be persuaded, by any Arguments of Man, to believe what is so contrary to their own gross and earthly Apprehensions. The Spirit of *Scepticism* and *Sadducism*, in
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Regard

Regard to all Communication between
 the visible and invisible Worlds, is at
 this Day so prevalent, that there is Room
 to question whether the Report even of
 an Angel from Heaven, if such a Being
 was to appear amongst us, would be able
 to overcome it. "If I have told you
 " earthly Things and ye believe not,
 " how shall ye believe if I tell you hea-
 " venly Things?"* is a Rebuke, which
 was surely never more applicable than
 to the incredulous Temper of the present
 Times: And what is most extraordinary,
 and seems most to be lamented, is, that
 this Temper hath taken deeper Root
 amongst the *Learned* than the *Unlearned*,
 inasmuch that it is even considered as a
 Reflection on the Character of a Philo-
 sopher and a Man of Letters, and a
 Proof of a little, narrow, or superstitious
 Mind, to admit of any super-natural
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* John iii. 12.

Agency either in the Way of Voice or Vision. Nevertheless, the Simple and the Sincere, who believe in a Heaven and a Hell, and in a Life after Death; and who are persuaded, on the Authority of their Bibles, that Men like themselves,* even during their Abode in the Body, have been admitted to see and hear what passes in another World, will not, it is to be hoped, so easily become the Dupes of such unhappy Incredulity. They will be convinced at least, that it is *possible* for the Almighty to effect at this Day what he has done in Days of old, and where the particular Purposes of his Providence require it, to open both the Eyes and Ears of his chosen Servants to a more immediate Inter-
course

* See the various Visions of the Prophets, as described in their Writings throughout. See also St. Paul's Relation of himself, 2 Cor. xii. 1 to 5; and the Whole of the Revelations of St. John.

course with Himself and his invisible Kingdom. They will see also, if they be at all acquainted with ecclesiastical History, that Something of this Sort of spiritual Communication has been vouchsafed in all Ages and Periods of the Church; and though it is not to be denied, that many false and groundless Relations of this Kind have been and are still circulated, yet they will be enabled to distinguish between the *true* and the *false*, the *real* and the *pretended*, and will not reject what is *genuine* on Account of what is *spurious*, any more than they would reject *Sterling* Coin because there are *Counterfeits*.

SOPH. You think then that the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, in Regard to his super-natural Communications, is well grounded?

PHIL. As to myself, I candidly confess, I do not entertain the smallest

Doubt concerning it, whatsoever Imputation of Weakness, Credulity, Superstition, or Ignorance, this Confession may expose me to. In Regard to others, I do not expect or even wish them to believe merely on the Authority of my Sentiments; nor shall I quarrel or dispute with any one, who is not disposed to think with me on this Matter. But, this I will be bold to assert, that it is the Duty of every Christian, at this Day, to think well *for himself* on the Subject, without resting too much on the Opinions of fallible Men; and not to be hasty in rejecting an Authority like that of Baron Swedenborg, merely because he declares that he has seen and heard what the Prophets and Saints of old declared they had seen and heard; remembering the sober and solid Advice formerly given on a similar Occasion, "If a Spirit or an Angel hath spoken to
" him,

“ him, let us not fight against God.”*
 And in Order to form a just Judgment,
 it appears to me that every candid Per-
 son is bound to consider further the
 Nature and Tendency of that Informa-
 tion which Baron Swedenborg brings
 concerning another World, for this
 ought surely to have it's proper Weight
 and Influence. As to myself, when I
 reflect on the uniform serious Assevera-
 tions of a pious and learned Man like
 Baron Swedenborg, during a Course of
 more than twenty-five Years, that he
 was favoured with such super-natural
 Intercourse; when I consider that he
 was as secure from the Delusions of En-
 thusiasm or an over-heated Imagination,
 as sound Sense and Sobriety of Under-
 standing could render any Mortal; when
 I weigh further the particular and in-
 teresting Relations, which in Conse-
 quence

* Acts xxiii. 9.

quence of his extraordinary Communications he has published concerning the other World, their Harmony, Consistence, Variety, Importance, and edifying Tendency; and when I see all this at the same Time supported and confirmed by a Purity and Consistence of Life and Doctrine agreeable thereto, and corresponding therewith, I must confess I feel a Weight of Evidence respecting the Author and his Writings, which I cannot withstand; and if such Evidence is not to be admitted as valid, it will be difficult to say what Evidence, in such a Case, is admissible. But in this, as in all other Things, People must be left to judge for themselves; for it is one of the Maxims inculcated by our Author, that no Person's free Will should be forced.

SOPH. Sir, I entirely agree with you in this, that it is best to leave such Things to every one's own private Conscience;
for

for it appears to me that each will be determined in his Judgment herein, not so much by the Arguments and Reasonings of others, as by the Bias of his own particular Disposition. If his Mind be fet towards the Things of Heaven, he will be disposed to credit those who bring him a Relation of such Things, especially if he finds such Relation agreeable to the obvious Sense of the Holy Scriptures, and tending to Purity of Life; but if his Mind be towards the Things of this World only, it is not then to be expected that the Relations of heavenly Messengers, howsoever well authenticated, will find Acceptance, according to that striking Testimony of our Lord, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the Dead."* Leaving, therefore, this Matter for the present,

* Luke xvi. 31.

present, I must now trouble you on another Subject, which somewhat perplexes me, and which is frequently spoken of in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and that is a *New Church*. Pray, Sir, what am I to understand concerning this *New Church*?

PHIL. May I first ask, what is the Idea which you annex to the Term *Church*?

SOPH. In my Opinion, Sir, the Term is of a very vague indefinite Signification, as used in our Language: For Instance, we call a Building of Brick and Stone a *Church*, when it is consecrated to sacred Purposes: We talk also of the *Church of England*, the *Church of Scotland*, the *Church of Rome*, &c. meaning thereby, as I should suppose, certain distinct Congregations of Persons united together by some particular Tenets of Faith and Doctrine, or particular Modes
of

of Worship: We profess to believe also in the *Holy Catholic Church*, by which, as I have always been taught to conceive, is meant the *real Church of Christ*, or the Congregation of his true Children throughout the whole World, by whatever particular Names they are called, or by whatever particular Doctrines and Modes of Worship they are distinguished, who *worship Him in Spirit and in Truth*, that is, according to his holy Will and Commandment.

PHIL. And pray, Sir, according to your Opinion, in which of these several Senses is the Term *Church* most properly to be understood?

SOPH. I should think in the latter,

PHIL. Why do you think so?

SOPH. Because it is very plain, from the general Use of the Term in the Sacred Scriptures, as where our Lord saith, "Upon this Rock will I build
" my

"my Church;"* and where the Apostle calleth the Church the *Body of Christ*,† that it does not signify a Building of Brick and Stone only; for the same Reason neither can it signify any particular Congregation of People united together by particular Modes of Worship and Tenets of Faith, because it is *possible* that such Congregation, notwithstanding their Modes of Worship, and Tenets of Faith and Doctrine, may be very *unchristian* and wicked People, and consequently cannot constitute that *Body of Christ* the Church, which must needs be pure and clean both in Heart and Life: The Term *Church* therefore, properly and scripturally speaking, as it appears to me, is to be conceived in an *universal* Sense, as comprehending all true Believers, who worship the Lord *Jesus Christ in Spirit and in Truth*.

PHIL.

* Matt. xvi. 18.

† Coloss. i. 18, 24.

PHIL. You distinguish then between the Term *Church* when spoken of a Building of Brick and Stone; of a *particular Congregation of Christians*; and of the *universal Body of sincere Believers throughout the World*?

SOPH. I do.

PHIL. And according to this *last* Sense, you think, it is properly and scripturally denominated the *Church of Christ*?

SOPH. Yes.

PHIL. And that particular Congregations of People, such, for Instance, as what is called the *Church of England*, the *Church of Scotland*, or the *Church of Rome*, &c. may, or may not, make a Part of the *universal Church*, or *Church of Christ*, or *Body of Christ*, according as their Lives are formed, or not formed, in Agreement with and Obedience to

to the Spirit of a right Faith and Love towards *Christ*?

SOPH. That is my Meaning.

PHIL. May I ask you further then, What do you conceive to be the *real genuine constituent Principles* necessary to form what is properly called the *Body or Church of Christ*?

SOPH. I should apprehend such Principles to be a genuine Faith and Love towards Christ, operating in the Heart and Life, producing all the Varieties of Christian Graces, Virtues, and Fruits, and tending thus to Man's Purification, a Renewal in an heavenly Nature and Image, and consequently a Conjunction with Heaven.

PHIL. No Modes of Worship, then, no Tenets or Doctrines of Faith, no particular Code of Articles or Canons, according to your Opinion, can constitute a *Church, properly and scripturally*
so

so called, if they be separated from the Purities of a genuine Christian Faith and Love operating as you have just now described?

SOPH. That is my Opinion: All such Things, as I conceive, when in a State of Separation from true Christian Faith and Love, productive of Newness of Life, may rather be considered as the *Sepulchre or Skeleton* of a Church, than the Church itself.

PHIL. Your Opinion is certainly right; keep close to this *just Idea* of a Church, and you will readily and clearly apprehend all that Baron Swedenborg has said in Regard to a *New Church*. His Doctrine on the Subject is simply this: The present Christian Church, through an unhappy Departure from genuine Faith and Love, is come to it's Decline, and become *no Church*; for where genuine Faith and Love are want-

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ing, there can be *no Church*, according to your own Principles. Not that it is to be supposed that, at this Day, there are *no* good People in the Christian World, who fear and love God; but that the Number of such is so small, in Respect to the whole Body of Christians at large, that they may *comparatively* be called *none*, answering to that Description in the Prophet, "Yet Gleaning-
" Grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an Olive-Tree, two or three
" Berries in the Top of the uppermost Bough, four or five in the outmost
" fruitful Branches thereof."* Nevertheless, the Divine Mercy and Wisdom requires, that there should be a *Church* on Earth, wherein the LORD may be known, loved, and obeyed, and thus Man may have Conjunction with God, and God with Man; otherwise Mankind

must

* Isaiah xvii. 6.

must perish everlastingly : It hath therefore pleased the LORD at this Time to lay the Foundations of a *New Church*, or, in other Words, to make such *new Discoveries* of Himself, his heavenly Will and Wisdom, and the eternal Laws of his Kingdom and Government, derived from the genuine Spirit and uncorrupted Sense of his Holy Word, as may operate to the Restoration of genuine Faith, Love, and Charity again amongst Men, and to the Reproduction thereby of all Christian Graces and Virtues, and thus to the heavenly Order, Happiness, and final Salvation of the Human Race, by restoring them to Conjunction with Heaven and the God of Heaven, in the Love, the Knowledge, and the Practice of the Laws of Heaven.

SOPH. But why should this Church be called a *new Church*? Are not all

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Churches *one* and *the same*, from the Beginning of the World, as constituting the Lord's Body, and consisting of the same spiritual Principles?

PHIL. Consider, Sir, and apprehend this well. In Regard to *Life* and *Essence*, there never was or can be more than *one real* and *true Church*, as there never was, or can be, more than *one* Will and Law of God, *one* Way of Salvation, and *one* Body of *Jesus Christ*, for Life eternal, or spiritual Life, in it's Essence, ever was, and ever must be, *one* and the *same*, just as Life temporal, or natural Life, as to it's Essence, ever was and must be *one* and the *same*: Nevertheless, as temporal or natural Life, at different Times, and in different Places, and by different Means, has been variously modified, and assumed different Forms and Appearances amongst Men, so it has been also with *spiritual* or *eternal*

nal

nal Life ; it has been at various Times, and in various Places, and by divers Means of *new* Openings of the genuine Truth of God's Word, variously modified, and assumed various Forms and Appearances here on Earth, under all which it was called, at the Time, a *new Church* : Nevertheless, each *new Church* was, in Fact, Nothing else but a Renewal or Reproduction, and thereby Continuation of the *essential Life* and *Spirit* of the preceding Church, opened under some new *Form, Dispensation, or Appearance*, accommodated to the peculiar Circumstances of Time, Place, and People, and calculated to exhibit to Mankind the Divine Mercy, Love, Wisdom, and Power, in all their infinite Varieties, and ever new Glories. It is therefore an unspeakable Satisfaction to my own Mind to think, that *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and every

other spiritual Member of the Church existing at that Time, and since, were in Heart *Christians*, as all true Christians are in Heart the *Children of Abraham*, and thus that the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian Churches were in *Essence* and *Life* one and the same; and by Parity of Reasoning, the *New Church* now about to be established will, in *Essence* and *Life*, be one and the same with all preceding Churches, and so constituted in the *universal* Body of *Jesus Christ*, that the good Members of all preceding Churches will perceive a Blessing from it, as it's own Members will perceive a Blessing from, and *enter into the Labours of*, all preceding Churches, according to what is intimated in those Words of the Apostle, " These all having obtained a good Report through Faith, " received not the Promise; God having " provided some better Thing for us, " that

* that they without us should not be made
* perfect.*

SOPH. By a *New Church Doctrine* then, as spoken of in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, am I to understand a *new Revelation*?

PHIL. If by a *new Revelation* you mean a new Law, a new Commandment, or a new Divine Word, promulged immediately from God, to supersede the old Law, Commandment, and Word, this you are not in any wise to understand: But if by a *new Revelation* you mean a *Re-publication* and *further Opening* of the old Law, Commandment, and Word, in Order to it's being more clearly apprehended according to it's proper and genuine Sense and Meaning, and that all the Perversions thereof, arising from false or mere external Interpretations, may be rectified, and it may

* Heb. xi. 39, 40.

may thus have a fuller Admittance to, and Operation upon, the Hearts and Lives of Mankind, according to it's heavenly Spirit and Intention; this you are to understand.

SOPH. But some may possibly ask, Why are not the Holy Scriptures *themselves* sufficient for all these Purposes of Instruction and Righteousness, without the Aid of Baron Swedenborg's Writings?

PHIL. The Holy Scriptures would doubtless *themselves* be sufficient to answer all the Purposes of heavenly Instruction and consequent Reformation of Mankind, provided they were well understood and practised, according to their genuine Sense and Signification. But it should be considered, that they may be misunderstood, and that without *sound Doctrine* derived from the Word of God by such as are enlightened, the

Word of God itself is obscure, and to some totally *dark*, or else it is *falsified* and *perverted*, every one interpreting and understanding the Scriptures according to the Doctrine which he has imbibed from Infancy. Thus the Jews, by the false Doctrine of their *Traditions*, had totally obscured and perverted the Word of God, making it *of none Effect*, according to our Lord's Testimony; and thus it may have happened at the present Time, and according to the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg has really happened, in Consequence whereof the pure Fountain of *living Water* is become so polluted and adulterated, as to be insufficient for the Purpose of sustaining spiritual Life; and hence he shews the Necessity of a pure and sound Form of Doctrine being again opened and published to Mankind, in Order to lead them to a right Understanding again of
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the Holy Word, that they may thus drink of the *pure Water of Life* for Instruction and consequent Renovation in Righteousness. How far the present Times required such a *new* Form of Doctrine, and how far the Doctrine opened in his Writings is calculated to answer the above great End and Purpose, must be left to the Decision of serious and intelligent Readers.

SOPH. But Baron Swedenborg calls the Doctrines, which he has delivered in his Writings, by the Name and Title of *the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem* or *New Church*: How am I conceive of this?

PAUL. You find, Sir, throughout the Prophets, particularly in *Isaiah*, Passages too numerous to be here recounted, wherein Mention is made of a glorious State of the Lord's Church, and particularly, "that the Light of the Moon
" should

"should be as the Light of the Sun,
 "and the Light of the Sun seven-fold,
 "as the Light of seven Days;" * "that
 "instead of the Thorn shall come up
 "the Fir-Tree, and instead of the Brier
 "shall come up the Myrtle-Tree;" †
 "that for Brass there should be Gold,
 "and for Iron Silver, and for Wood
 "Brass, and for Stones Iron;" ‡ denot-
 ing a Manifestation of different Degrees
 of heavenly Truth and Goodness, as su-
 perior to what had been heretofore
 known, as the *Light of the Sun* is supe-
 rior to the *Light of the Moon*; or as the
Fir-Tree and *Myrtle-Tree* are superior
 to the *Thorn* and *Brier*; or as *Silver* and
Gold are to the *baser Metals* here spoken
 of. These, and many other prophetic
 Scriptures of a like Nature, have in ge-
 neral been applied to the first Christian
 Church

* Isaiah xxx. 26.

† Isaiah lv. 13.

‡ Isaiah lx. 17.

Church established at our Lord's Coming in the Flesh, to denote the Blessings thereby communicated to Mankind. But that many of these blessed Prophecies remain yet unfulfilled, and have Relation to some *future* happy States of the Church of God, there is every Reason to suppose. The Book of the *Revelations* puts this Matter out of all Doubt, there being *express* Mention made in this Book of a glorious State of the Church *posterior* to the Lord's first Coming, and described under the Name and Character of the *New Jerusalem*, by which, according to the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, is signified a *New Church*, or a new Dispensation of heavenly Truth and Doctrine to be opened from the pure Word of God amongst Men, in the last Ages of the World, to restore again pure Love and Charity; to remove all Iniquity, Error, and

and Disorder; and to put Man in Possession of all the Blessedness described, when "the Tabernacle of God shall
 "be with Men, and he will dwell with
 "them, and they shall be his People,
 "and God himself shall be with them,
 "and be their God; and God shall
 "wipe away all Tears from their Eyes;
 "and there shall be no more Death,
 "neither Sorrow nor Crying, neither
 "shall there be any more Pain, for the
 "former Things shall be passed away."*

Baron Swedenborg further testifies, that the Doctrines of Truth contained in his Writings have all of them Respect to this new and glorious State of the Church, or *New Jerusalem*, and were intended to conduct Mankind into it; the LORD having chosen him expressly for this Purpose, to unfold the *spiritual*

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* Rev. xxi. 3, 4.

internal Sense of the Holy Scriptures, and to make known again thereby to Mankind the great eternal Laws of Order, Truth, and Righteousness, which through corrupt Traditions had been miserably perverted; that so, walking according to these Laws, they might come out of all false and evil Principles both of Life and Doctrine, and regain their primitive paradisiacal State of Innocence, Love, and Charity, through a blessed Conjunction with God and his Kingdom.

SOPH. I am to conceive then of the *New Jerusalem*, or *New Church*, that it is a Dispensation of the purest Goodness, Truth, Righteousness, Peace, and Order, revealed to Man from the genuine Sense of the Word of God; and that the Doctrines of this New Dispensation are now at this Time opened and published

published to the World in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg?

PHIL. This is the true Meaning of the *New Church*, as spoken of by Baron Swedenborg. But let me caution you to distinguish carefully herein between the *New Jerusalem* or *New Church*, and it's *Doctrines* as delivered in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg; for if this Distinction be not well attended to, much Mistake and Misapprehension may be the Consequence. Remember therefore, that the *Doctrines* of the *Church*, and the *Church itself*, are very different Things. The *Doctrines* are merely Principles of Truth introductory to the *Church*; but the *Church itself* consists of those Principles brought into Life amongst Men, and incorporated with the Spirit of Charity, and conjoined thereby with Heaven, and thus rendered living, operative, and fruitful

from the God of Heaven. It is *possible*, therefore, Man may be principled in the *Doctrine* of the *New Church*, and yet not be a Member of or belong to the *New Church*.

SOPH. You would insinuate then, if I understand you right, that it is not sufficient merely to read and understand the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, in Order to become a Member of the *New Church*, but that Man must be *obedient* to the *Doctrine* of that Church therein set forth, joining therewith all pure Love and Charity, by the Practice of Virtue, before he can be said to have a Part in the Blessings of the *New Jerusalem*.

PHIL. That is my Meaning: The Writings of Baron Swedenborg contain merely the *Principles* of the heavenly Science needful to open and form the *New Church* on Earth, either generally
or

or *individually*; and as such they will be found most highly profitable to all who wish to attain unto true *Church-Membership*; but to attain unto *Church-Membership*, it is necessary that those Principles should be brought into Practice by a sincere Obedience, according to what our Lord said respecting the Doctrines which He taught, "If ye know these Things, happy are ye if ye do them."* Then, and in that Proportion only, the *New Church* will be opened and formed both *individually* and *generally*, which *New Church*, Sir, I conceive to be a State of the most exalted Love, Charity, and consequent operative Virtues and Graces from Heaven, that was ever yet manifested here on Earth; consisting in an entire Eradication of all the inordinate, false, and evil Principles of Self-love and the Love

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* John xiii. 17.

of the World, with all the proud, envious, wrathful, and covetous Affections therein originating; and at the same Time a Renewal or Regeneration, wrought by the purest Principles of heavenly Goodness and Truth, through Obedience, in all the several Forms and Degrees of human Life, whether *social, civil, moral, intellectual, or spiritual*, according to what I lately signified to you in speaking of the *Doctrine of Life* as taught in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg. Thus, and in no other Way, as it appears to me, and as those Writings abundantly testify, "can the Tabernacle of God be with Men, and he dwell with them, and they become his People." And of this it would be well that all the Readers of these Writings should be mindful, lest they should fancy themselves Members of the *New Church*, merely because they are acquainted and delighted

delighted with it's *Doctrines*; whereas, according to the Testimony of those Writings, the *New Church* can only be implanted in Man through Obedience, and passing through the several States of Repentance and Regeneration, and the Temptations or Trials proper to each, till his whole Life, in all it's Principles, Persuasions, and Practices, is brought into an entire Conformity to the Will and the Wisdom of God, by an absolute Humiliation and Submission thereto.

SOPH. Well, Sir, my Mind is much satisfied and delighted with this Idea of a *New Church*, as tending to renew, bless, and perfect all the Principles of corrupt human Nature throughout the Earth, by restoring them to Conjunction with God and Heaven. But what am I to conceive in Regard to the *external Forms and Ceremonies* of this *New Church*? Every Church, you know,
Sir,

Sir, has it's *outward* as well as it's *inward* Worship. Do you apprehend then, or do the Writings of Baron Swedenborg any where suggest, that any Change will be hereby wrought in the *Externals* of Divine Worship at present used throughout Christendom?

PHIL. Sir, the Writings of Baron Swedenborg are so fully taken up with pointing out the *Essentials* of the *New Church*, which are pure Love and Faith, and a consequent Obedience of Life, that they say little concerning it's *Formalities*, except this, that the outward Rites of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* should be retained therein. In Regard to other Parts of external Worship, though such Worship is *in general* strongly recommended and enforced as expedient and profitable, yet no *particular Form* is expressly pointed out; and therefore we may reasonably suppose, that every one

is

is left at Liberty to make Use of such *Forms*, as may seem best suited to his own particular State and spiritual Benefit. There is one Circumstance, however, which I cannot help here remarking as of some Importance, and deserving serious Attention from all the Readers of those Writings, and that is, that very weighty Cautions are contained therein against any rash or hasty Opposition to, and Rejection of, those *external Forms of Worship*, in which Man has been *educated*, and which are *publicly sanctioned* in the Country where he lives.

SOPH. Pray, Sir, be so kind to point out to me some Passages in those Writings, which contain the Cautions you speak of.

PHIL. I shall willingly do it, in Order to convince you that Baron Swedenborg exercised a most cool deliberate Judgment in such Things, and was no violent

violent *Innovator* in Matters not immediately connected with Purity of Life ; thus setting an admirable Example to all his Readers of wise Conduct, and of Caution against hasty Changes in Points *not essential* to Salvation. The Passages I mean are these : Speaking in his Book of *Heavenly Mysteries*, n. 1992, concerning the *Externals* of Worship implanted from Infancy, he has these Words, " The Lord is never willing to destroy " suddenly, much less instantaneously, " the Worship inseminated in any one " from Infancy, for this would be to " pluck up the Root, and thereby destroy the holy Principle of Adoration " and Worship deeply implanted, which " the Lord never breaks but bends ; " the holy Principle of Worship rooted " in early Life is of such a Nature, that " it cannot endure Violence, but must " be bended with Moderation and " Gentle-

“Gentleness:” And again, in the same Book, n. 2180, are these Words, “What
“is once implanted from Infancy with
“an Idea of Sanctity, particular if it
“be implanted into Children by their
“Fathers, and thereby rooted in them,
“this the Lord never breaks, but bends,
“unless it be contrary to essential Order.”

And to shew that these *general* Principles of the Divine Operation apply, in a *particular* Manner, to the New Church now establishing, the Author, in his *Apocalypsis Explicata*, (where he is explaining what is written of the *two Witnesses* * *ascending into Heaven in a Cloud*, Rev. xi. 12,) interprets the Passage

* If it should be objected, that the *two Witnesses* in this Passage denote the *Goods of Love and the Truths of Doctrine*, and that the Explication only applies to such Goods and Truths abstractedly, and not to those who receive them, it may be answered, that the Author himself asserts expressly,

sage as denoting *the Separation of the Witnesses from those who do not receive them*; but then adds, that this Separation was to be a Separation *as to Internals, and not as to Externals*: And to shew further that these Externals were the Externals of *Worship*, as well as of other Things, he adds, n. 671, of the same Work, "*By the Cloud is meant the External of the Word, of the Church, and of Worship.*" To the same Purpose, in the same Work, n. 764, speaking of the
Earth

n. 666, of the same Work, that by the *two Witnesses* are signified, not only the Goods of Love and the Truths of Doctrine in the Abstract, but likewise (his Words are) "*all they who are principled in the Goods of Love by the Truths of Doctrine.*" Moreover, it is a Maxim with the Author, that whatsoever is predicable of Good and Truth in the Abstract, is predicable also of the recipient Subjects; and therefore the above Explication must needs extend to such Subjects, consequently to the Members of the New Church.

Earth helping the Woman (Rev. xii. 16), he says expressly, that "*the Church,*" "*which is called the New Jerusalem,*" "*is to tarry (or abide) for a while*" "*amongst those who are in the Doctrine*" "*of Faith separate [from Charity],*" "*whilst it grows to the full,* until Pro-*" "*vision is made [for it's Establishment]*" "*amongst more ;*" and he assigns as a Reason for the New Church continuing in

* It may possibly be contended by some, that the New Church has already attained to the *full State* here spoken of by the Author, and that consequently the Time is already come for it's Separation from external Communion with the Old Church. This however seems highly improbable, when it is considered what the present Age of the New Church is, and when this Age is compared with the Time declared to be needful for the Growth of the first Christian Church to a *full State*. The Author asserts, n. 732 of the *Apocalypsis Explicata*, that the first Christian Church did not attain to it's *full State* till *more than a Century* after it's first Establishment.

in such an unseparated State as to Externals, that it might be *helped and also increased* by those who are of the former or Old Church. To this may be added the Author's own Example, in that he himself continued in outward Communion with the Church in which he had been educated, having a few Hours before his Death received the holy Communion from a Swedish Clergyman, according to the Form of the Swedish Church; and he never called any from the Use of those *Externals* of Worship, to which they had been accustomed from Infancy. I am nevertheless well aware, that Persons of a certain Character, and under the Influence of a warm external Zeal for what they call the Truth, observing some Differences between certain Doctrines contained in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and certain Expressions in the present established

blished *Liturgies*, or Forms of public Worship, will be for pushing Matters to Extremes, by hastily rejecting the *old*, and as hastily introducing *new* Forms. This is a Spirit of the *natural* Man, which hath too much, alas! prevailed in all Ages of the Church, to it's great Disturbance and Confusion, whilst *Novelty* of *Modes* and *Expressions* of Worship has been more attended to than *Newness* of *Life*, and Men have imagined true Church-Membership to consist rather in a *well-penned Liturgy*, than in the living and heavenly Graces of a *well-regulated Faith* and *Love*. What however I would here contend for is, that the Writings of Baron Swedenborg are far from encouraging such a Spirit.

SOPH. Do you suppose then that the present established Forms of public Worship are in themselves so perfect, as to admit of no Change for the better?

PHIL. This is altogether a different Consideration. It must be confessed, that in all established Forms of external public Worship, there ever was, and probably ever will be, more or less of *Imperfection*, inasmuch as they are all *human* Establishments, and of Consequence cannot be *perfect*. This is allowed to be the Case with all Liturgies in all Churches throughout Christendom at this Day, which have grown more or less imperfect, according as the Church which adopts them has grown more or less corrupt in Doctrine and in Life. But the great Question is, How far are these Forms, in their present Imperfection, adapted to the *Bulk* of the People for whose Use they were intended? May they not be better suited to the *Multitude* than more perfect Forms? We know that the *Letter* of Holy Scripture itself is thus accommodated to Man's natural
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and gross Apprehensions, for we read that the Lord taught his Word to his Disciples "as they were able to hear it;"* and he had "many Things to say unto them, but," says he, "ye cannot bear them now;"† and may not this be the Case with the present established Forms of public Worship? Might there not therefore be a Danger in making any Change, till the People were in a better State to *bear* and profit by it? And would it not be wiser and more expedient, and consequently more becoming the Duty of every sincere and humble Christian, at present, instead of separating from his weak and ignorant Brethren in the Use of their imperfect Forms, rather to accommodate himself herein to their Infirmities; to set them thus an Example of orderly Life and Submission to the Ordinances of Man for

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* Mark iv. 33.

† John xvi. 12.

the Lord's Sake; to acquire thereby such an Influence over them, as might lead them by Degrees to receive more solid and perfect Principles of Doctrine and of Life? The Truth being thus recommended, it appears to me there might be better Hope of a more general Reception, and as the Reception became more general, there might be Hope also, in Process of Time, of it's effecting an Alteration and Improvement in every Liturgy of every Church in Christendom. But to attempt a Change in any other Way, is as contrary, I am persuaded, to the whole Tenor and Spirit of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, as it would be contradictory to the Example and Precepts of our Lord and his Apostles, who never rejected, or even spake against, the Externals of the Jewish Worship, but continued in the constant Use and Toleration of those

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very Formalities, which they well knew were, in Process of Time, to be done away by the Doctrines which they preached.

SOPH. But, Sir, I was lately in Company where it was asserted by a Reader of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, that all the present external Forms of Worship, used in Christian Churches, are to be considered as constituting what is called in the Revelation the *Dragon*, *Babylon*, and the *great Whore*, and therefore that it is *dangerous* even to come into a Congregation where such Forms are used.

PHIL. Sir, it is an easy Matter to make Assertions, and to apply hard Words to favour our own pre-conceived Opinions. I doubt not but that the Person, who made such an Assertion, had affixed, in his *own Ideas*, such a Signification to the Terms *Dragon*, *Babylon*, and the

the *great Whore*, spoken of in the Revelation, and made them denote the present established Forms of public Worship. But I am bold to assert, this is a Sense of those Words not to be found in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, who, in his Interpretation of them in his *Apocalypsis Revelata*, informs us expressly, that by the *Dragon* are signified all such Persons in the Christian World, as “separate Faith from Charity, and attribute saving Power to the former without the latter;” and that by *Babylon* are signified all those, “who have profaned, or do profane, the holy Things of the Word of God, by the Spirit of Self-Love in the Lust of Dominion;” and by the *great Whore* those, “who have adulterated, or who do adulterate, the holy Truths of the Word of God by Evil of Life.” But what now has all this to do with the outward

outward established Forms of public Worship? The above abominable Terms, it is plain, are here applied to denote, not *Forms of dead Words*, but *Tempers of living Men*, whether of Individuals or of Congregations, who either through Evil of Life are confirmed in false Doctrines, or, being principled in Truth of Doctrine, live in Evil of Life. It is therefore well to be noted, that every one, yea, even a devout Reader and Admirer of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, may justly come under the Appellation of *Dragon, Babylon, and great Whore*, in Case his Life and the Doctrines which he receives do not accord with each other. In Regard to the *Danger* of entering into a Congregation where such Forms are used, I cannot see, for my own Part, whence it should come, (even supposing those Forms so *Dragon-like* as you have heard them

them represented,) except from a Spirit of *false Zeal* and *severe Judgment*, void of Meekness, Moderation, and Charity. For if Meekness, Moderation, and Charity be not with us, we shall assuredly be in *Danger*, whether in the *Use* of Forms, or in the *Rejection* of them; but if we be influenced by true Meekness, Moderation, and Charity, I will venture to say we might then be unhurt and undefiled, not only in an Assembly of Christians using their present Forms of public Worship, but also in an Assembly of Jews or of Pagans, inasmuch as "to
" the pure all Things are pure; and who
" is he that will harm you, if ye be Followers of that which is good?

SOPH. But does not Baron Swedenborg speak of the Danger of joining together the Faith of what he calls the *Old Church*, with that of the *New*?

PHIL.

PHIL. He does, and most justly; because the Faith of what he calls the *Old Church* is a Faith, he says, directed towards *three distinct Persons* in the God-head, as constituting three distinct Beings of different Virtues, Powers, and Operations; whereas the Faith of the *New Church*, as hath been shewn, is directed towards *One Person*, in whom is the *Divine Trinity*. The Faith of the *Old Church* is also distinguished from that of the *New* in several other essential Particulars. But this has Nothing at all to do with Modes and Expressions of Worship, which, like *the Letter of Scripture*, will turn any Way to favour the particular Faith or Belief in which Man is principled, whether true or false: Supposing him then really principled in the Faith and Life of the *New Church*, all his Forms of Worship, be they ever so imperfect, will needs be brought

brought to favour that Faith and Life in his Mind, and will thus be consecrated to his spiritual Good, according to the Measure of his Sincerity in the Use of them.

SOPH. You think then, that a *Clergyman of the Church of England*, for Instance, may receive the Doctrines contained in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and yet continue *conscientiously* in the Exercise of his Ministry, according to the established Forms of that Church?

PHIL. I not only think that he may continue *conscientiously* in the Exercise of his Ministry, but that he would follow the Dictates of a very *ill-informed Conscience*, if he did not continue therein; so well persuaded am I, in my own Mind, that it never was the Design of Baron Swedenborg in his Writings to call any Clergyman from the Exercise of his Ministry.

Ministry. For is it not expressly declared in those Writings, that the Clergy are gifted with particular Graces of the Holy Spirit, as *Illumination* and *Instruction*,* and are accordingly to be the Persons, who, having first themselves received the Truths of the *New Church Doctrine*, shall be the Means of extirpating false Principles amongst the Laity? † But how now could this possibly be the Case, if the Clergy were to cease from their ministerial Functions, as soon as they had imbibed those Truths? Is it not also expressly declared further, in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, “that none ought to teach Truths
 “but Ministers appointed to teach; for
 “if otherwise, then the Church is disturbed with Heresies, and rent asunder?”

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* See *True Christian Religion*, n. 146.

† See *True Christian Religion*, n. 784.

“der?”* If then these *appointed Ministers* were all of them to resign their ecclesiastical Functions, who would be left, according to the Declaration of Baron Swedenborg, to teach the Truth?

SOPH. But might it not be called *Prevarication, Hypocrisy, or Dissimulation*, in a Clergyman, to use Forms of public Prayer, and Confessions of Faith, which did not agree altogether with his own Ideas?

PHIL. Your Question involves a very nice Point of *Casuistry*; and I believe that every Clergyman, who accedes heartily to the Doctrines contained in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, will suffer more or less Trial in his Mind before he can be fully satisfied concerning that Point, if I may judge from my own Experience: For the Charge of *Prevarication, Hypocrisy, and Dissimulation*,

* See *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 6822.

tion, if *just*, is a very heavy one, both burthensome to the Conscience and injurious to the Character; and therefore will be avoided as much as possible by every conscientious Minister. But the great Point to be determined in the present Case is, *whether such a Charge be just*; and I will tell you some of the Considerations which have inclined me to think that it is *not just*, at least in Regard to a *Minister of the Church of England*, who receives the Writings of Baron Swedenborg. All the Disagreement which such a Minister will find between his own Ideas, and the Liturgy of the Church in which he ministers, may be referred to two Points, *the Doctrine of the Trinity*, and *the Doctrine concerning the Christian Lord and Redeemer*: In Respect to the first of these Points, a *Trinity* is allowed both in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, and in

the Liturgy of the Church of England, and that this Trinity consists of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, who all Three make *One Only God*; and the only Difference is in the Manner of conceiving and expressing this Trinity. So in Regard to the second Point, the *Divinity* of the Christian Lord and Redeemer is acknowledged also on both Sides, and that He is a *proper* Object of Worship; and the only Difference here again is in the Manner of conceiving and expressing it. The Question of Conscience then, in the present Case, appears to me to be this; Is it *Prevarication, Hypocrisy, or Dissimulation*, for a Clergyman to use Expressions *not altogether agreeing with his own Ideas*, when yet the *real Things* signified by those Expressions, according to the Construction which he is at Liberty to put upon them, *do agree with his Ideas*? Another Consideration, which

which has had great Weight with me on the Subject, is this; May not much Mischief come sometimes from *too nice a Scrupulousness* in Regard to Points of this and a similar Nature? And may not therefore the Rules of good Conscience, Duty, and Order require, that certain private Reluctances of Sentiment should be submitted to, in Order to avoid some greater Inconveniencies which might attend a Non-Submission? A remarkable Case of this Sort occurs in the History of the Apostle Paul: You remember how, on his Return to Jerusalem, he was persuaded by the other Apostles *to purify himself with four other Men which had a Vow, and be at Charges with them*; and the Reason urged for his doing so was this, “ that the Multitude might know, that those Things whereof they were informed concerning him were Nothing, but that he

“ himself also walked orderly, and kept
“ the Law.* Here the Apostle, for the
Sake of Order, and to avoid giving Of-
fence to the Multitude, in a Matter
which might have been attended with
hurtful Consequences to these his *weak*
Brethren, charitably submitted to do
Things, which in *themselves*, we may
well suppose, were not altogether agree-
able to his own Ideas of what was need-
ful and meet to be done; for he well
knew, that the *Law of Ordinances* was
then about to be superseded by a purer
Dispensation. This might be called
Prevarication, *Hypocrisy*, or *Dissimula-*
tion in St. Paul; nevertheless he him-
self was doubtless thoroughly persuaded
in his own Mind that he acted right;
and every enlightened conscientious
Clergyman will be thoroughly persuaded
also, that whatever he does in Upright-
ness

* See Acts xxi. 17 to 27.

ness and Sincerity before God, for good and useful Ends, for the Preservation of Order, and to avoid giving *Offence to his weak Brethren*, is done without *Prevarication, Hypocrisy, or Dissimulation*, though possibly he may use Words, as the Apostle did Ordinances, not altogether agreeing with his own Ideas. The Advice therefore which I should wish to give every Clergyman, on such an Occasion, is this: Let him rather learn to bear with the Reluctances of his own private Judgment, in the Use of particular Expressions not precisely in Agreement with such as he himself would have adopted, than violate the great Law of Charity, by forsaking and offending his Flock, and thus putting it out of his Power to do them any Service: And let him be assured, that if, for the Good of those committed to his Care, he submits to the Imperfections
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of human Establishments, and would rather *privately* suffer a Restraint on his own Mind from those Imperfections, than disturb *public Order*, and *offend a weak Brother*, he is so far from being a *Prevaricator*, an *Hypocrite*, or a *Dissembler*, that he deserves rather to be called a *Martyr* for the Truth's Sake, inasmuch as he makes a continual Sacrifice of his own Self-will to the Welfare and Edification of others.

SOPH. And pray, Sir, what Advice would you give to a private Layman, who receives the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, in Regard to the Use of the present established Forms of Worship?

PHIL. I would earnestly counsel him, in the Words of the Apostle, to "submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake;"* and to give "no

* 1 Pet. ii. 13.

“no Offence in any Thing, that the
 “Ministry be not blamed.”* I would
 recommend also to his most serious
 Consideration these weighty Words of
 the Lord to his Disciples, “The Scribes
 “and the Pharisees sit in Moses’s Seat;
 “all therefore whatsoever they bid you
 “observe, that observe and do; but do
 “not ye after their Works.”† Not
 that I would insinuate hereby, that the
 Christian Clergy at this Day are in as
 corrupt a State as the Scribes and Pha-
 risees of old were; but even *supposing* it
 so, I would contend from these Words,
 that, it is the Duty of every faithful Dis-
 ciple of Christ, to pay the Clergy the
 Honour and Respect due to their holy
 Office, and to listen attentively to their
 Teaching, as *sitting in the Seat*, not only
 of *Moses*, but also of *Christ* and his
Apostles.

* 2 Corinth. vi. 3.

† Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

Apostles. I would further wish him to attend well to the *general* Spirit and Tenor of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, rather than to any particular Part of them to confirm any particular Doctrine, inasmuch as he will find a Thousand and a Thousand Things therein leading to Purity of Heart, Humility, Love, Charity, Mercy, Honour and Respect due to the Clergy, and all the Graces and Virtues of a regenerate Life, but not a *single Word* throughout calling any one to leave the external Forms of Worship in which he has been educated. I would next point out to him those Passages in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, which recommend particularly *external Worship*, and which shew the great Danger of violating the holy Principle thereby insinuated in Man from Infancy. And further, I would recommend to his especial Notice

Notice what is repeated again and again in the same Writings concerning *true Worship*, viz. that it consists in real Humiliation of Heart before the Lord, under the Influences of a pure Love and Charity; * and that if the Worshipper be in this Spirit, all his Forms of Worship, let them be ever so imperfect in themselves, will assuredly be consecrated and sanctified to his eternal Good; but if he hath not this Spirit, let his external Modes and Forms be what they may, his Worship is abominable and profane. I would further hint to him, that his eternal Salvation does not depend upon the *Forms of Words* which he uses in his Prayers, nor upon the *Liturgies of the Church* to which he belongs, but upon the Sincerity of his own Life in
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* Note. See Extracts from the *Arcana Cælestia* concerning Piety in the *Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem*, n. 129.

departing from all Evil, and setting himself to will, to think, and to do what is right and good according to God's Commandments. I would therefore counsel him to leave the *Alteration of Creeds and Litanies* to those, whose Office it is, and to whom it particularly belongs to compose and ordain such external Forms of Worship for the general Advancement of Piety, inasmuch as these Persons *alone* are to be answerable for the Imperfections of such Forms; and I would advise him, at the same Time, to get all the Good he can from them in their present State, and not make them worse than they really are by his Misrepresentations or Abuse of them. Nevertheless, if he was a Person in Authority, who had any Power, or might be supposed to have any Influence in changing old established Forms of Worship for new Ones, which might

might better answer the Purposes of public Utility, I would then advise him earnestly, yea, I would convince him it was his Duty, to attempt such a Change, whensoever a proper Occasion offered, and it might be done *safely*, without being productive of more real Mischief than real Good; for I am not such a Stickler for old Forms as to think they are never to be altered; nor do I believe that the Forms at present in Use are to remain for ever, being of the Number of those changeable Things of which it is written, *As a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed*: All I would insist upon is, that the Change should be made with the utmost Prudence and Discretion, at the proper and needful Time, and by Persons also invested with proper Authority to make it. And lastly, I would press upon him to consider his Neighbour's Edification,

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and to ask himself this important Question, whether he thought it would conduce to his Neighbour's Welfare and the Good of Society, that all the present established Forms of public Worship should be instantly annihilated? If his Conscience answered in the Negative, I would then make it plainly appear to him, how by separating himself from such established Forms, he would infallibly, in some Measure, thwart his Neighbour's Edification, and thereby endanger the public Welfare; whilst on the contrary, by countenancing such Forms, his Example would tend to the Preservation of good Order, and thus prove edifying to his Neighbour, and conducive to the best Interests of Society.

SOPH. Do you think, Sir, that the Clergy are likely to receive the Writings of Baron Swedenborg?

PHIL.

PHIL. I can see no reasonable Cause why they should not, inasmuch as they will find Nothing in those Writings, but what they *might* find in their Bibles, and what is warranted by the pure Spirit of that most holy Book. It appears however to me as if the Matter would rest simply here: If a Clergyman be of a worldly Spirit, and be more eager after Gain, Preferment, or vain Glory, than the Salvation of Souls from a Love of Truth and Goodness, he may then probably reject the Testimony of Baron Swedenborg, and not believe his Writings, and for this plain Reason, because he may from the same Cause doubt even his Bible: But if, on the other Hand, he be a sincere Seeker after Truth for Truth's Sake, and be so far removed from a worldly and selfish Spirit of Pride, of Pre-eminence, and of false Glory, as to desire earnestly the Salvation

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of Mankind from a real Love of Goodness, he will then most assuredly not only receive, but greatly delight in, the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, because he will find them most perfectly accord both with the Spirit of his own Mind, and with the Spirit of his Bible. I would however be understood to make this latter Assertion only in Regard to those, whose Minds have not been warped by Prejudices and Misrepresentations; for these Things, we know, sometimes have an Influence on the best disposed Minds, to make them reject for a Time what afterwards, when those Prejudices are removed, and they come to be better informed, they receive most cordially.

SOPH. You do not then apprehend, Sir, that by the Term *New Church* is meant a mere *new* Sect, or particular Denomination of Christians, as *Quakers*,
Mora-

Moravians, Methodists, and the like; but that it denotes a Dispensation of universal Grace, Mercy, and Truth, to the whole Human Race, without Exception or Limitation of Time, Place, or Sect?

PHIL. So I apprehend; and according to this *universal* Sense the Term *New Church* is adopted by Baron Swedenborg, and shewn to correspond herein with the concurrent Declarations of Holy Scripture, both in the *Old* and *New Testament*, wheresoever that Dispensation is pointed at; as where it is written in the Prophets, "The Lord hath made bare
" his holy Arm in the Eyes of *all the*
" *Nations*, and *all the Ends of the Earth*
" shall see the Salvation of our God."*
Again, "The *Gentiles* shall come to thy
" Light, and Kings to the Brightness of
" thy Rising; thy Sons shall come *from*
" *far*, and thy Daughters shall be nursed

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* Isaiah lii. 10.

“ at thy Side : Then thou shalt see and
“ flow together, and thine Heart shall
“ fear and be enlarged, because the
“ *Abundance of the Sea* shall be con-
“ verted unto Thee, the Forces of the
“ Gentiles shall come unto Thee.”*
Again, “ In this Mountain shall the Lord
“ of Hosts make unto *all People* a Feast
“ of fat Things, a Feast of Wines on the
“ Lees ; and he will destroy in this
“ Mountain the Face of the Covering
“ cast over *all People*, and the Veil that
“ is spread over *all Nations*.”† Again,
“ Fear not, for I am with thee ; I will
“ bring thy Seed from the *East*, and ga-
“ ther thee from the *West* ; I will say to
“ the *North*, Give up ; and to the *South*,
“ Keep not back ; bring my Sons *from*
“ *far*, and my Daughters from the Ends
“ of the Earth.”‡ Again, “ I saw in
“ the

* Isaiah lx. 3, 4, 5. † Isaiah xxv. 6, 7.

‡ Isaiah xliii. 5, 6.

" the Night Visions, and behold, One
 " like the *Son of Man* came with the
 " Clouds of Heaven ; and there was
 " given Him Dominion, and Glory, and
 " a Kingdom, that *all People, Nations,*
 " and *Languages*, should serve Him."*
 Again, " It shall come to pass afterwards,
 " that I will pour out my Spirit upon *all*
 " *Flesh*."† Again, "*The Earth* shall be
 " filled with the Knowledge of the Glory
 " of the Lord, as the Waters cover the
 " Sea."‡ Again, " It shall come to
 " pass in that Day that living Waters
 " shall go out from Jerusalem, half of
 " them toward the former Sea, and half
 " of them toward the hinder Sea ; and
 " the Lord shall be King over *all the*
 " *Earth*. In that Day shall there be
 " *One Lord*, and his *Name One*."|| But
 this is declared still more manifestly in
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* Dan. vii. 13, 14.

† Joel ii. 28.

‡ Hab. ii. 14.

|| Zech. xiv. 8, 9.

the Revelation in the following Passages, "After this I beheld, and lo! a
" great Multitude which no Man could
" number, of *all Nations*, and *Kindreds*,
" and *People*, and *Tongues*, stood before
" the Throne, and before the Lamb."*
Again, "The seventh Angel sounded;
" and there were great Voices in Heaven,
" saying, *The Kingdoms of this World* are
" become the Kingdoms of our Lord
" and of his *Christ*."† Again, "I saw
" another Angel fly in the Midst of
" Heaven, having the everlasting Gospel
" to preach unto them that dwell on the
" Earth, and to *every Nation*, and *Kindred*, and *Tongue*, and *People*."‡ Again,
speaking of the *New Jerusalem*, "The
" *Nations* of them which are saved shall
" walk in the Light of it; and the *Kings*
" of the *Earth* do bring their Glory and
" Honour

* Rev. vii. 9. † Rev. xi. 15.

‡ Rev. xiv. 6.

“ Honour into it; and they shall bring
 “ the Glory and Honour of *the Nations*
 “ into it.”* Nothing therefore can be
 plainer, than that the *New Jerusalem*
 Dispensation is to be *universal*, and to
 extend unto *all People, Nations, and Lan-*
guages on the Face of the Earth, to be
 a Blessing unto such as are meet to re-
 ceive a Blessing: *Sects and Sectarians*, as
 such, can find no Place in this *general*
Assembly of the ransomed of the Lord: All
 the little Distinctions of Modes, Forms,
 and particular Expressions of Devotion
 and Worship, will be swallowed up and
 lost in the unlimited Effusions of hea-
 venly Love, Charity, and Benevolence,
 with which the Heart of every Member
 of this glorious *New Church and Body of*
Jesus Christ will overflow one towards
 another. Men will no longer judge one
 another as to the mere *Externals* of
 Church-

* Rev. xxi. 24, 26.

Church-Communion, be they perfect, or be they imperfect, for they will be taught, that whosoever acknowledges the *Incar-nate Jehovah* in Heart and Life, departing from all Evil, and doing what is right and good according to the Commandment, he is a Member of the *New Jerusalem*, a *living Stone* in the Lord's *new Temple*, and a Part of that great Family in Heaven and Earth, whose common Father and Head is *Jesus Christ*. Every one therefore will call his Neighbour *Brother*, in whom he observes this Spirit of pure Charity, and he will ask no Questions concerning the Form of Words which compose his Creed, but will be satisfied with observing in him the Purity and Power of an heavenly Life. Such, it appears to me, will be the blessed Temper influencing Mankind, under a Reception of the pure Dispensation of universal Grace and Mercy

Mercy now going forth ; and it is my firm Persuasion, and a Source of unutterable Consolation to my Mind, that there is not a single Person throughout the Earth, who is principled in any Degree of Goodness, but what will sooner or later be benefited by this Dispensation, and gathered within the happy Pale of this glorious *New Church*. Nay, I can never behold a single Spark of genuine Love and Charity, Mercy and Benevolence, in any Person whatsoever, whether he hath ever heard of the Name of Baron Swedenborg and his Writings, or not, but I fancy to myself that it belongs to this new Kingdom or Body of the *Great Redeemer* ; and as it descends from this *Almighty Lord*, so will it be gathered sooner or later to Him, in the blessed Acknowledgment that He is it's *Father, Preserver, Saviour, and God*. But as every human Being, who is principled

in any Sort or Degree of Good, will find a Blessing under this new Manifestation of heavenly Truth, so I believe on the other Hand, according to what is abundantly declared both in the prophetic Writings of the Old Testament, and also in the Revelation, that all who are not so principled, but live in Evil of Life confirmed and unrepented of, will find their Misery and Confusion hereby increased, being brought into severer Judgment and Condemnation, according to the great eternal Laws by which every new Opening and Discovery of the Divine Word of God is regulated in it's Operation. For as it was at the Lord's *first Coming* into the World, to open his Word *anew* amongst Men, that this his Appearing was for Joy, Peace, Gathering together, and Salvation to the good, but for Trouble, Disturbance, Separation, and Destruction to the wicked, so
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it appears to me, from the general Testimony of the Holy Scriptures, it will be at this his *second Coming*.

SOPH. *This his second Coming*, Sir? What is it you mean? Would you insinuate that the Establishment of this New Church is the Lord's *second Coming*?

PHIL. Nay, Sir, be not so hasty: Let me ask you, What it is you mean by the Lord's *second Coming*?

SOPH. I have always been taught to conceive, that the Lord's *second Coming* would be in the *Clouds of Heaven*, with all his holy Angels, to execute Judgment on the ungodly, and to gather the righteous into his Kingdom, at which Time the present visible Heavens and Earth are to be destroyed with Fire, and the whole material Creation perish and be dissolved.

PHIL. And you conceive this to be
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a just and *scriptural* Idea of the Lord's *second Coming*?

SOPH. I do.

PHIL. But are you sure that you do not put a wrong Construction herein on the Words of Scripture, for Instance, taking that in a mere *literal* Sense, which was intended to be taken in a *spiritual* Sense? You know that the Jews of old, by thus abiding in the *Letter* of Scripture only, misconceived the Nature of the Lord's *first Coming*, imagining that he was to appear in some extraordinary *outward* Pomp, as a *temporal* Prince and Deliverer, and on this Account they were unable to discern and acknowledge him in his *internal* Glory, as a *spiritual* Prince and Deliverer. Are you sure now, that by this Idea which you have conceived, you are not imposing on yourself as the Jews of old did?

SOPH.

SOPH. Nay, Sir, I only declare to you what my Idea is on this Subject, and I believe it to be the Idea which generally prevails amongst Christians, even the most *learned*.

PHIL. I believe so too; but is it more to be depended upon on that Account? The Idea of a temporal Prince and Deliverer was what *generally* prevailed amongst the Jews, even the most *learned*, at the Time of our Lord's first Advent; but Experience shewed what a vain and groundless Idea that was.

SOPH. In what other Sense then, pray, Sir, am I to conceive of the Lord's *second Coming*?

PHIL. Why not in a *spiritual* Sense?

SOPH. How do you mean in a *spiritual* Sense?

PHIL. As a Restorer of Righteousness in the Earth, by opening anew, and re-publishing to Mankind, the pure

Laws of his Kingdom from his own Holy Word ; by making Himself herein *known* again to his People, who through Evil of Life and Unbelief had lost the true Knowledge of Him ; by inspiring them thus anew with the Love of Himself and of Virtue ; by checking the Powers of Ungodliness and Infidelity, which are at this Day risen to so alarming a Height ; and finally by replenishing the World with all the heavenly Graces, Virtues, and Blessings of Love, Purity, and Peace, according to all those happy Descriptions given by his Prophets concerning his future Church or Kingdom to be established here on Earth. Would not yourself and every other serious Person call this a *real Coming* of the Lord, full as real as if he should appear *in Person in the Clouds* of the visible Heavens ? Nay, when rightly considered, would it not also be found

to be a real Coming and Appearance in the Clouds?

SOPH. How do you mean?

PHIL. What, Sir, if those Clouds spoken of in Holy Scripture, wherein we are taught the *Son of Man* is to appear, should no more mean *natural* Clouds, than the *Mountain of the Lord of Hosts* means a *natural* Mountain, or than the *River of God* means a *natural* River, or than the *holy City New Jerusalem* means a *natural* City? *Jehovah*, you know, is represented in Scripture as riding upon the Clouds, and making them his Chariots; and his Worship and Strength are declared to be in the Clouds;* his Faithfulness and Truth are also said to reach unto the Clouds:† Now can you, or can any confiderate Person suppose, that these Clouds, on which *Jehovah*

R 3 rideth,

* Psalm lxxviii. 34.

† Psalm xxxvi. 5. lvii. 10.

rideth, which are his *Chariots*, in which his *Worship* and *Strength* are, and to which his *Righteousness* and *Truth* reach, mean the *natural material Clouds* of the *visible Heavens*? Would it not be more agreeable to *Wisdom* and *Truth* to say, that by these *Clouds* are rather meant, according to the Interpretation given in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, the *literal* Sense of his Holy Word, which is as a *Vail* or *Cloud* hiding and overshadowing the *spiritual* Sense? Many serious Christians have long complained, that the Book of God's Word is become, at this Day, a *sealed Book*, according to that Description in the Prophet, "The Vision of all is become
 " unto you as the Words of a Book that
 " is sealed, which Men deliver to one
 " that is learned, saying, Read this, I
 " pray thee; and he saith, I cannot,
 " for it is sealed: And the Book is de-
 " livered

"livered to him that is not learned,
 "faying, Read this, I pray thee; and he
 "faith, I am not learned."* What now
 if this *sealed Book*, through the Divine
 Providence, should be *opened*? What if
 the Mysteries of Divine Wisdom and
 Truth, so long hidden under the *Letter*
 thereof, should at this Day be manifest-
 ed, and made plain to Man's Apprehen-
 sion and Understanding? What if the
Power and Glory of the Divine Truth
 should thus appear shining through
 the *Clouds* of Darkness and Obscurity,
 which had before covered and conceal-
 ed it? What if Man should hereby be
 renewed in Righteousness, re-taught the
 Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, made, as the
 Apostle expresth it, to *behold* in this
 Holy Word, *as in a Glass, the Glory of*
the Lord, and to be changed into the same
Image

* *Isaiah* xxix. 11, 12.

*Image from Glory to Glory,** being replenished with all heavenly Graces and Virtues of a regenerate Life? Might not this be truly called *the Sign of the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory?*

SOPH. But how may I be assured, that this is the true *Scripture* Idea of the Lord's *second Coming?*

PHIL. Read only the 21st Chapter of the Revelation, and you will there find it plainly declared, that a most extraordinary blessed Work remains *still* to be accomplished *on this Earth*, in the Way of Renovation of it's Inhabitants in Righteousness. For it is written, "I John saw the holy City New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband."† Here it is expressly

* 2 Cor. iii. 18. † Rev. xxi. 2.

exprefsly laid, that the holy City *came down from God out of Heaven*; and it immediately follows, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his People, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."* This Scripture therefore must needs relate to some blessed Dispensation which was to be opened of God, and to have Place *here below* amongst Mankind, in an Age posterior to that when this Prophecy was written.

SOPH. So it should seem.

PHIL. And what then can you, or any other serious Person, possibly understand by this *holy City New Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven*, and this *Tabernacle of God* which is to be with Men, but some fresh Openings or Discoveries of heavenly Truth from the Word of God,

* Rev. xxi. 3.

God, made known to Mankind, whereby they might become his Temples, *Tavernacles*, or Places of Abode? For where can God have his Temple, *Tavernacle*, or Place of Abode, but in upright and pure Hearts, formed by and according to his own holy Will, Word, or Wisdom?

SOPH. But what has all this to do with the *Lord's Coming*?

PHIL. Rather say, my dear Sir, What is this but the *Lord's Coming*, and his *Coming* in the utmost Reality of *Power* and *Glory*? For can the Holy Word of the Lord be opened and made manifest? can it's hidden Wisdom be discovered, and brought down to Man's Apprehension? can it's heavenly Contents be infeminated in the human Heart? can Righteousness and Truth thus be made to flourish in the Earth, for it's Renewal and Renovation, without the
Lord's

Lord's *Coming*? Was not the Lord's *first Coming* to open thus his Holy Word anew in Men's Minds, and thereby to *purify to himself a peculiar People*, or, in other Words, to form a *New Church* of true spiritual Worshippers? And can a *peculiar People* be again purified unto him, through a fresh Publication of the *genuine* Sense of his Word, without his *Coming again*? What I would therefore here insist upon is this, in Conformity both to what is declared in Holy Scripture, and also in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, that whenever and where-soever any fresh Openings of the Divine Truth of the Word of God are made unto Mankind, whereby a *New Church* of sincere spiritual Worshippers is established in the Earth, then and in that Place the *Lord must needs come*; just as in Regard to an *individual Man*, when-soever the Light of the Divine Truth is opened

opened in his Understanding, and his Mind is renewed in Righteousness through Obedience thereto, and he is thus made what may be called an *individual Church*, the Lord must needs spiritually *come* to, and dwell with, such a Man, according to his own Words, "If a Man love Me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him, and we will *come* unto him, and make our Abode with him." * And as we have already seen, that by the *New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven, and the Tabernacle of God being with Men*, is meant such a new Dispensation of heavenly Righteousness and Truth, or, in other Words, a Re-publication of the Divine Will and Wisdom from the Word of God opened anew, in Order for the Formation of a *New Church* amongst Men, this must needs signify, and be the

* John xiv. 23.

the same Thing with the Lord's *second Coming*.

SOPH. Sir, I think I begin to apprehend your Meaning. You allow, with myself and other Christians, that the Lord is to *come again* upon Earth, but you understand this to be meant *spiritually*, as denoting, not the *Destruction* of the Earth, but it's *Renovation*, by purging it from Sin, and purifying the Hearts, the Understandings, and the Lives of Mankind, through the Operation of genuine Truth, opened anew from his own Holy Word.

PHIL. This is my Meaning: For it is plain the Lord's *second Coming* cannot be to *destroy* the Earth, inasmuch as He Himself says, speaking on the Subject, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on the Earth?"* And in another Place, "Then shall two be

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* Luke xviii. 8.

“ in the Field ; the one shall be taken,
“ and the other left. Two Women shall
“ be grinding at the Mill, the one shall
“ be taken, and the other left ;” * which
Words can have no Meaning, when
applied to his Coming to *destroy* the
Earth, but have a most instructive Mean-
ing when applied to his Coming, for
the Purpose of purging and renewing it
in the Sense above described.

SOPH. You conceive then this *Re-
newal* of the Earth to be signified by the
New Jerusalem, or the *new Earth* spoken
of in the Prophets and the Revelations ?

PHIL. So I conceive ; and this *re-
newed* State of the Earth, or of the
Hearts and Lives of Mankind, is what
Baron Swedenborg calls the *New Church* ;
the Doctrines whereof are contained in
his Writings ; and the Establishment of
this Church, through the Opening and
Forma-

* Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.

Formation of the *genuine* Truth of the Holy Word of God in human Minds, he declares and clearly proves to be the true Sense and full Substance of the Lord's *second Coming*.

SOPH. Well, Sir, I find no Objection at all in my Mind to this Idea, as you have explained it; but it seems to me both consistent with the true Sense of Holy Scripture, and at the same Time very satisfactory, animating, and edifying; and I promise you I shall take it into serious Consideration. At present I shall beg Leave only to trouble you with another Question or two in Regard to the Writings of Baron Swedenborg; and first, Is there any Reason to apprehend, that the Readers of these Writings will be exposed to *Persecution*?

PHIL. Not so much, I should conceive, to *outward* Persecution, but to *inward* in a high Degree.

SOHP. I cannot say I understand clearly your Distinction.

PHIL. By *outward* Persecution I mean what may arise outwardly from Men, but by *inward*, what may arise from the Opposition of contending Persuasions and Principles, in the Minds of those who embrace the Doctrines, and live accordingly. In Regard to the first, there is little Reason to be alarmed about it, especially here in *England*, where an universal *Toleration* is allowed to all religious Sentiments and Opinions, which have not a Tendency to create Disorder in the State. Opposition, indeed, may be excited in the Way of Contradiction and Dispute, both public and private, which may be called a Species of *Persecution*, especially when attended with a base and censorious Judgment; but this will little affect those who cordially receive the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem*,
since

since they will be taught by those Doctrines, that the Cavils and Raillery of Men are of small Account, provided their own Consciences be upright before God; and they will have this further Security against Dispute and Contradiction, that they will never on any Account promote it, either by a Fondness to enter into Controversy, or by *returning Railing for Railing* with such as are petulant and froward; knowing that *the Servant of the Lord must not strive*, and that true Charity is never contentious about Matters of Opinion, but will *bear all Things, suffer all Things, and endure all Things*, rather than kindle the fierce Fire of Debate and Animosity, having Respect to what is *good* in all, and judging every one rather from, and according to, the Spirit of *Goodness*, than the zealous and sharp Spirit of Truth separate from Goodness. Nevertheless they will be

bold and prudent to defend the Truth, as proper Occasions present themselves, and where it can be done to Edification.

SOPH. You think then that *inward* Persecution is what may chiefly be expected from a Reception of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg? Pray explain to me what you mean by *inward* Persecution.

PHIL. I conceive it, Sir, in a *double* Sense; first, in Regard to *Doctrine*, and secondly in Regard to *Life*; first, in Regard to *Doctrine*, it will be found no easy Matter for any one, at this Day, to bring his Understanding out of false Persuasions and pre-conceived Opinions, or those external Appearances and Apprehensions of Truth, which are at present circulating so plentifully in the Christian World, and which are all of them ready to oppose with Violence the Admission of genuine Truth, as manifested

fested from the genuine Sense of the
 Holy Scriptures, cleared from the false
 Glosses and partial Interpretation of
 mere human Wisdom and Learning.
 This will be particularly the Case with
 such, as in religious Matters have here-
 tofore thought much for themselves, and
 confirmed their Minds in any false or
 wild Persuasions, whether arising from
 a Spirit of Enthusiasm, Fanaticism, or
 any other misguided and blind Devotion.
 And in the second Place, in Regard to
Life, it will be found a still more dif-
 ficult Thing to bring this into Confor-
 mity to pure Doctrine, by constantly
 having Respect to the chief End of such
 Doctrine, which is Charity, through
 Humiliation and Obedience; by regard-
 ing speculative Opinions no further than
 as they are directed to this End; by
 exalting the Spirit of Mercy, Love, and
 Meekness, above that of curious Know-
 ledge

ledge in deep Mysteries, and the Sciences of holy Things; by judging no longer either ourselves or others from and according to the *latter* Spirit, but the *former*; by not resting in the mere Illumination of the Understanding, but proceeding to the thorough Purgation of the Will and Affections, according to such Illumination; in short, by joining together the Principles of pure Gospel Charity and Gospel Faith, so that both may become operative in the Life, and the whole Man thus, with all his vital Powers and Activities, being humble, submissive, and yielding to heavenly Influences, may be formed and fixed in the heavenly Life and Order of the Kingdom of God, and bring forth the heavenly Fruits thereof to God's Glory, and the common Good. This, as it appears to me, is *truly* to receive the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem*, and in the

Accom-

Accomplishment of this Work, all, who so receive those Doctrines, must expect to meet with much *inward* Persecution of opposing Spirits and Principles: Nevertheless, if they continue patient and faithful, they will experience sooner or later the Truth of those consolatory Words, "Blessed are they who are persecuted for Righteousness' Sake, for their's is the Kingdom of Heaven."*

SOPH. In what Manner then do you suppose the Doctrines of the *New Church* here on Earth can be most effectually propagated, and the *New Church* established?

PHIL. As to the *Propagation of the Doctrines*, I think it may most effectually be promoted by the *Press*; that is, by printing and circulating the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, wherein those Doctrines are contained. The Clergy also, when

* Matt. v. 10.

when they become acquainted with, and Receivers of those Doctrines, may be a Means of circulating them amongst their respective Flocks, by *preaching* them from the *Pulpit*.

SOPH. Would you think it right in a *Layman*, who received those Doctrines, to set himself up for a public Teacher and Preacher of them in the Streets, or in private Conventicles?

PHIL. No, Sir; I should think this would be confounding the Order of *Clergy* and *Laity*, which, according to the Testimony of those Doctrines, ought not to be confounded by any Means; it would also tend, according to their further Testimony, to introduce Disturbance, Heresy, and Confusion into the Church; for it is expressly declared in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, as was observed above, that "none ought to teach Truths, but Ministers appointed

“ pointed to teach ; for if otherwise,
 “ then the Church is disturbed with
 “ Heresies, and rent asunder :” * It
 would likewise be a Means of bringing
 the Writings themselves into much Dis-
 credit and Reproach, by encouraging
 Disorder in the Church, and tending to
 throw down all Distinction of Persons
 and Characters, which is by no Means
 the Design of those Writings. I am
 further of Opinion, that the utmost
 Prudence and Discretion will be re-
 quired, in speaking of these Doctrines,
 whether publicly or privately, lest, being
 too hastily pressed upon any one, they
 should be misconceived, misunderstood,
 or perverted, for Want of due Prepara-
 tion in the Hearer to receive them
 aright ; for all, we know, are not capa-
 ble of receiving the same Truths, and
 therefore Truths themselves ought in
 Charity

* See *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 6822.

Charity to be with-held from some Persons, lest *the Pearls should be cast before Swine*. Our Lord's Example, on this Occasion, is a Lesson we should never forget; "And with many such Parables" "spake he the Word unto them, as they" "were able to hear it."*

SOPH. You conceive then that the *New Church* will be most effectually established by Means of the *Press* and the *Pulpit*?

PHIL. No, Sir; do not misunderstand me. I said only that *the Doctrines of the New Church would be most effectually propagated by this Means*; but, as I hinted to you before, there is a very great Difference between *the Propagation of the Doctrines*, and *the Establishment of the Church*. The Church can only be established by *living in Conformity to the Doctrines*: If the Doctrines therefore be
only

* Mark iv. 33.

only read or heard, and are not brought into Life through Obedience, there can be no *New Church*, even supposing the Writings of Baron Swedenborg were circulated throughout the whole Earth, and understood perfectly by every Inhabitant thereof.

SOPH. Do you suppose then that the *Doctrines* contained in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg may be *perverted* and *rendered useless*?

PHIL. Tell me, pray, Sir, what is there so good, and so pure, which is not capable of being perverted and abused? May not the purest Atmosphere be contaminated? May not the most wholesome Waters be rendered putrid? May not the most generous Wines be adulterated? What has been more perverted and abused than the pure and holy Word of Truth itself, whilst, as the Lord testifieth, "it hath been made of none Ef-

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“fect by the Traditions of Men;” * and as the Apostle testifieth, “They
“that are unstable and unlearned have
“wrested it to their own Destruction?” † And there is no Reason to
expect, that the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem* will be exempt, in this Respect,
from the general Condition of all other Things. *It must needs be that Offences come*; and to prevent our being
offended or discouraged hereat, the Lord permitted a *Judas* to have Place in the
Apostleship. Had I therefore a thousand Tongues, I should think I never
could use them enough, in repeating again and again to all the Readers and
Receivers of the heavenly Doctrines contained in the Writings of Baron
Swedenborg, that if they should fall short in the Practice of them; if they
should

* See Matt. xv. 6.

† See 2 Pet. iii. 16.

should fancy they are of the *Lord's New Church*, merely because they accede to those Doctrines; if they should be satisfied with an Illumination of their Understandings thereby, without labouring to make pure their Wills and Affections; if they should become thus *wise in their own Conceits*, whilst their unrenewed Tempers and Dispositions declare them to be *unwise*; if they should think light of the great Duties of Repentance, Humiliation, Self-Denial, Charity, Meekness, Moderation, and Obedience, being *puffed up with Knowledge*; if they should judge and censure others, who cannot think as they do, and despise former Dispensations of Wisdom and Holiness; if they should leave the sure Way of the Cross, and choose for themselves another Way to Heaven; if they should lose Sight of the great *essential Ends* of the Doctrines they embrace, and begin to

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contend about *Formalities*; if they should confound the appointed Distinctions of Order in Society, and intrude into Stations to which they are not called; if, in short, they do not take Heed to advance in Charity and Purity of Life, as they advance in Science, and to become more humble and more holy, according to their more perfect Knowledge of the Nature and Measures of Holiness; in this Case, they will pervert and render useless the pure and edifying Doctrines of the *New Church*, and will proportionably retard it's Establishment; and they may be compared to that "foolish
" Man, who built his House upon the
" Sand; and the Rain descended, and
" the Floods came, and the Winds
" blew, and beat upon that House, and
" it fell, and great was the Fall of it."*
But if, on the contrary, they are wise to
live

* See Matt. vii. 26, 27.

live as they have been taught, and to bring all their Knowledges, Doctrines, and Opinions, into humble Obedience to the Spirit of Charity; if to the *Wisdom of the Serpent* they join the *Harmlessness of the Dove*, and to the *Understanding of Men*, the *Simplicity and Innocence of little Children*; if they labour thus to become newly formed, quickened, enlivened, and sanctified entirely of the Lord, by and through his Spirit, in all the Parts and Principles both of Soul and Body; if they are careful, according to the great Law of Charity, opened and explained in the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem*, each to act uprightly and faithfully in his own Station and Calling, and not intrude into the Stations and Callings of others; if they account *Charity* a greater Thing than *Knowledge*, and seek rather to be humbled in *Obedience*, than to be exalted in

T 3 *Science*;

Science; if they are wise to bring forth the *Fruits of Holiness* in their Lives, in the same Proportion that they multiply Truths in their Understandings; in this Case the heavenly Doctrines of the *New Church* will be preserved pure from all Perversion, and will be found to be most salutary and efficacious in the Restoration of Man's spiritual Principles, and thereby to the Establishment of the *New Jerusalem* here on Earth; and all who thus receive and practise those Doctrines, may be likened unto "that wise
" Man, who built his House upon a
" Rock; and the Rain descended, and
" the Floods came, and the Winds blew
" and beat upon that House, and it
" fell not; for it was founded upon a
" Rock."*

SOPH. And pray, Sir, what do you suppose will be the Effects of such a right

* See Matt, vii, 24, 25.

right unperverted Reception of these Doctrines amongst Men?

PHIL. It appears to me that Mankind will be enabled thereby to attain unto a more exalted Spirit of Love and Charity; unto a purer and more distinct Illumination of Wisdom and Truth; unto a greater Freedom in the Exercise of spiritual Powers and Faculties; unto a fuller and more extensive Operation of spiritual Life in all it's several Degrees; and thus unto a purer Intercourse and closer Conjunction with Heaven and the Lord of Heaven, than was heretofore attainable.

SOPH. Do you mean, by *an Intercourse and Conjunction with Heaven*, that the Readers of the Writings of Baron Swedenborg are to expect and look for the same heavenly Communications, in the Way of open Vision and Voice, that Baron Swedenborg himself enjoyed?

PHIL.

PHIL. No, Sir, that is not my Meaning: Such *open* Communications were indeed vouchsafed to Baron Swedenborg for wise Purposes of the Divine Providence; but he never leads his Readers, in any Part of his Writings, to expect the same. He leads them, however, to expect and look for what amounts to the same; yea, what is even greater and more excellent.

SOPH. As how?

PHIL. In the Way of *invisible* Communication and Association with Heaven and it's Inhabitants.

SOPH. I do not comprehend you.

PHIL. Know then, Sir, and understand, that, according to the Testimony of the sacred Writings, as opened by Baron Swedenborg, every Man hath Communication and Association with the invisible World of Spirits, whether he knows it or not, according to the
Nature,

Nature, Quality, and Measure of his Love, and the Nature, Quality, and Extent of his Wisdom, as grounded in, and derived from, that Love. If, therefore, the ruling Principles of Man's Will be formed according to heavenly Love, which is Love towards the Lord, and Love towards his Neighbour, and the ruling Persuasions of his Understanding be formed according to the Wisdom of such Love, which is the genuine Truth of the Holy Commandment or Word of God, he then lives, wills, thinks, speaks, and acts proportionably from Heaven, and in Conjunction therewith, and is in invisible Association continually with the blessed Inhabitants thereof, being internally, as to his Spirit, united to, and one with them. And such *invisible* Communication I hold to be greater and more excellent than any which is *open* and *manifest*,

manifest, agreeable to the Import of our Lord's Words to Thomas; "Thomas, " because thou hast seen Me, thou hast " believed; blessed are they that have " not seen, and yet have believed."*

SOPH. But, Sir, I had always conceived it to be a Mark of extraordinary Purity and Holiness in any one to be favoured with spiritual Visions and Manifestations, and was led to think very highly of Baron Swedenborg on this Account.

PHIL. This is the Case with the Generality of Mankind. They are apt to be caught with *Appearances*, and to exalt them above the *Substance* and *Reality* of Things. Many, for Instance, would think it a great Thing to see the Lord Face to Face, to converse with Angels and Spirits, and to be caught up with St. Paul into the *Third Heaven*,

who

* John xx. 29.

who yet esteem it but a *small* Thing to become humble, meek, charitable, and obedient Christians; when nevertheless a rightly humble, meek, charitable, and obedient Mind ever sees God, ever converses with Angels, and is ever in the Third Heaven, according to the truest and fullest Sense of those Expressions, and attains thus unto a higher State of Purification and Acceptation with God, than could possibly be effected by any mere outward Visions and Revelations.

SOPH. Ought not I then to think highly of Baron Swedenborg by Reason of his spiritual Communications?

PHIL. Yes, Sir, assuredly; but not more highly of him, on this Account, than of any other humble, sincere, and charitable Christian, who truly fears God, and keeps his Commandments. For Baron Swedenborg had no particular Merit by Reason of his high Illuminations

tions and Spiritual Intercourses; and if you could ask himself, I am persuaded he would tell you so, and that all his *real* Merit and Greatness consisted in greatly exalting God and his Holy Word, in making himself very little, in thinking vilely of himself as himself, and in endeavouring continually to amend himself by a more sincere Repentance and Obedience to God's holy Will and Commandments, according as all other Christians are called to do, and in the doing of which they are as highly favoured of God, have as near Intercourse with his Kingdom, and are as acceptable to Him, as the most illuminated of his Saints and Seers.

SOPH. You think then, that in Proportion as the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem* are received and formed into Life, Mankind will be enabled to attain unto a purer Intercourse and closer Conjunction

junction with Heaven, and thereby with the Lord of Heaven, in the Way of invisible Communication of Righteousness, Truth, and Peace, than heretofore?

PHIL. I think so, and for this Reason, because by the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem*, Mankind will be supplied with purer and sounder Principles of Truth for the Formation and Regulation of the Life in all it's several Degrees; and every one knows, or may know, that Man's Connection with Heaven must depend altogether upon the Purity and Soundness of those Principles. For Heaven, it must be allowed, is a Form of the purest and most perfect Order, derived from the Word of God, according as it is written, "By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made;"* and in Consequence of being such a Form, Heaven is capa-

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* Psalm xxxiii. 6.

ble of receiving the purest and most perfect Life from God, which is the Life of Love and Charity, every Thing receiving Life according to it's Form: In Proportion, therefore, as Mankind suffer their Minds to be made Forms of pure and perfect Order from the Word of God, in the same Proportion they come into the Form of Heaven, and consequently are receptive of the pure and perfect Life of Heaven; and being of the same Form, and partaking of the same common Life, they must of Necessity be one, and in close Conjunction with each other, according to the Words of the Lord concerning those who received his Doctrine, "The Glory which thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be One, even as We are One; I in Them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One."*

SOPH.

* John xvii. 22, 23.

SOPH. You suppose then, Sir, that by the Reception of the Doctrines of the *New Jerusalem*, and their Formation in the Life, there will be effected some Renewal of the *internal spiritual Forms* of Man's Mind or Spirit, whereby those Forms will be rendered capable of receiving the purer Influences of the Life of Heaven, which is Love and Charity, and Man will thus be closer joined with Heaven and it's Inhabitants in spiritual, though invisible Intercourse and Association, tending to improve the Blessedness both of his temporal and eternal Life?

PHIL. That is my Meaning; for it appears to me, that the present fallen, degraded, miserable, and sinful State of Man, in which he is so far separated from Communication with Heaven and it's blessed Life, is owing solely to the Perversion of the internal spiritual Forms

of his Soul, or Spirit, occasioned by Evil of Life, and a Departure thereby from an Obedience to the genuine Truth of God's holy Word; but as he returns to the Truth in Obedience and the Good of Life, all those perverted Forms of his Spirit will be restored to their primitive Order, and he will thus be renewed in primitive Beauty and Integrity of Form, whereby he will be capable of near Communication and blessed Intercourse again with God and Heaven.

SOPH. But you were speaking of the Renewal of these spiritual Forms in all the several Degrees of Life: How am I to understand this?

PHIL. Consider and understand, Sir, that Man's Life consists of several Degrees, as the *natural*, the *rational*, and the *spiritual* Degrees, and in the present Corruption, Disorder, or Perversion of human Spirits through Sin, all these
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several Degrees have suffered Injury, being disfigured as to Form, and degraded as to Life; but in the Renovation under the *New Jerusalem* Dispensation, there is good Reason to hope, that all these several Degrees of human Life, whether *natural*, *rational*, or *spiritual*, will be restored each to Newness of Form and Order, and thereby fitted to receive Newness of Life and Blessedness. And deny me not, Sir, the delightful Indulgence of this Hope, who have long been a Mourner in *Zion*, weeping over her Desolations, and lamenting the Perversion and Destruction of her beautiful and heavenly Forms: For surely the Promises of God must have their Accomplishment. *Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Was the *New Jerusalem* foreseen descending from God out of Heaven, and shall it

not descend? *Heaven and Earth may pass away, but thy Word shall not pass away!* And charge me not, SH, with the Spirit of Enthusiasm, when I assure you, that it is not only my fond Hope, but also my firm Belief, that the *body City* is already beginning to descend, to the rectifying and regulating all the fallen disordered Powers, Principles, and Forms of the human Spirit and Body. Mankind surely will henceforth love God and one another more heartily, cordially, and effectually, than they have heretofore done. The Corruptions of selfish, worldly, fleshly, and corporeal Love will be removed. All the *spiritual* Powers and Affections will be purified, and restored to their proper Order and Subordination, in the Acknowledgment of and Submission to their Divine Original, the manifested **JEHOVAH**. In the mean Time the *rational* Powers of
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the Mind will partake of the heavenly Benediction, by the right Formation and Use whereof Man will be enabled to discover solid Principles of Truth, and to confirm himself therein, to the Exaltation, Regulation, Purification, and Security of his spiritual Life. The Distinctions between Good and Evil, Truth and Error, will thus be more fully ascertained, the Laws of eternal Order better understood, and the several Duties of Man, in his several Relationships, as an Inhabitant both of this World and of another, more clearly discerned and perceived. Enthusiasm, Fanaticism, and all the Errors of a wild and disordered Imagination, arising from a blind Zeal, will be hereby supplanted, and will give Place to a clear, calm, and steady Illumination of the Intellect from the genuine Sense of God's Word, well formed in the Life, and well digested

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in the rational Mind. Nor will the *natural Powers* be left unblest: All the *natural Affections*, which are agreeable to the Divine Goodness, will be preserved alive, being traced up to, and joined with, their correspondent spiritual Loves, wherein they originate. Every *natural Knowledge* will be called in to adorn the *New Jerusalem Temple*, and will lend it's Aid to sing the eternal Praises of *Him who sitteth on the Throne, and of the Lamb, for ever and ever*. Every *useful Art and Science* also, and whatever else may contribute to Man's natural Comforts and Conveniences here below, will be restored to their proper Place and Order, become sanctified in the Divine Subordination, and called *holy unto the Lord*; whilst all *vicious, vain, and frivolous Arts*, and all *Science, falsely so called*, will flee away, like the Shades of Night before the rising Sun. And

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as Man's *corporeal* Part hath partook of the general Corruption through Sin, and become thereby *deformed, infirm, and diseased*, so, in the Renovation of his internal spiritual Forms through Righteousness, why may not we reasonably suppose, that this *corporeal* Part will partake also of the Blessing, and that even the *Bodies* of Mankind will in Process of Time recover their pristine Health, Soundness, and Beauty? In short, Sir, I believe every human Principle and Power will by this Dispensation be so restored and renovated, as to unite all Mankind in one general Confession and Adoration of a Creator, Redeemer, and Saviour, in the glorious Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, one God blessed for evermore.

SOPH. Is it to be supposed that, under this Dispensation, any Change will take Place in the external State of civil

Society,

Society, so as to overthrow the Distinctions of *Rank* and *Order* amongst Mankind?

PHIL. No, Sir; it is to be supposed that the present Distinctions of Rank and Order will continue, and that Nothing will be changed but the *State of Mind* in which those Distinctions will be held and exercised; there will therefore still continue to be a Difference of Station, of Office, and of Character amongst Men, but the *Pride* and *Vanity* arising from that Difference will be removed and lost; for every Member of the *New Jerusalem*, from the highest to the lowest, will consider himself as a *Servant* of the Public, in the Station appointed for him by an all-wise Providence, to promote the *common Good*, under the Influence of the same common Spirit of Good-will and Charity; and thus, though there be a Difference of
Office,

Office, Employment, and Character, yet all being influenced by one and the same Spirit, "the first will be last, and the "last first." *Kings* therefore, and those who are in Authority, will execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth. *Priests*, and those who have spiritual Administration, will wait on their Ministry, publishing the pure Laws of spiritual Order and Truth from the pure Love thereof. *Soldiers* will be courageous from Principle, and will be valiant in Defence of the just Laws of Nations, but without Violence, Injustice, or Cruelty. *Merchants* will pursue Commerce, not in the Spirit of Covetousness, but of universal Good-will, to open the Doors of Communication between distant People, in the Way of mutual Comfort, Convenience, and Benevolence. *Mechanics* will be skilful and industrious, each in his several Occupation, but without

without Vice and Artifice. *Scholars* will study the Sciences, not in the Pride thereof, but in the pure Affection of Truth, to adorn the heavenly *Bride*, the *Lamb's Wife*, with Raiment of Needle-Work. All Orders and Ranks of Men, in short, will be upright, faithful, content, and diligent, in their several Callings, from a sincere Principle of *Glory to God, and Good-will towards Men*. Such, it appears to me, will be some of the blessed Effects arising from a right Reception of the Doctrines of the *New Church*, and Application of them to the Life: and I am sure, Sir, that both you, and every sincere Christian, must be ready to join us in earnest Prayer, that the *Kingdoms of this World may thus become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*.

My dear Love, I am, Sir, FAREWELL.

Yours affectionate Son, and Disciple, J. W.

FINIS.

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church,
ACCORDING TO THE
WRITINGS of BARON SWEDENBORG;
WITH THE
LIFE of the AUTHOR.

FROM HURD'S HISTORY OF ALL RELIGIONS.

THIS Infant Church has hitherto been but little noticed; but from the very interesting Nature of it's Doctrines, as well as from the Numbers which are daily flocking to it, in different Parts of the World, it seems highly probable that it will soon become an Object of very general Attention and Inquiry. It is worthy of Remark, that the Professors and Members of this *New Church* seem totally free from that party

Zeal and sectarian Spirit which modern Enthusiasm has made the Characteristic of too many, and which must ever prove detrimental to the Interests of true Religion. A Principle of universal Love and Benevolence, extended not only to those who differ from them in Point of Sentiment, but even to their very Enemies (if they have any), seems to be a general and distinguishing Feature of this *New Church*, and stamps an Authority upon it's Doctrines, which might otherwise from their Novelty be doubted and disregarded.

But before we speak of the Doctrines themselves, we will first take a short View of the Life of their Author, his Rank in the Kingdom to which he belonged, and the Character he has always borne with the learned World.

Baron Swedenborg was born at Stockholm, in the Year of our Lord 1689.

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His Father's Name was Jesper Swedberg, Bishop of West-Gothia, and a Man of celebrated Character in his Time. He enjoyed early the Advantages of a liberal Education, and being naturally endowed with uncommon Talents for the Acquirement of Learning, his Progress in the Sciences was rapid and extensive; and at an early Period in Life he distinguished himself by several Publications, which gave Proof of equal Genius and Erudition.

Did Occasion permit, we might here give a long List of our Author's literary and philosophical Productions; but as our Subject leads us more particularly to the Consideration of his Theological Character and Writings, we shall only observe concerning his other Works, that they are held in high Esteem by the Learned in all Parts of Europe, bearing evident Marks of extraordinary

Genius, extensive Erudition, solid Judgment, and important Discovery, and (what was a distinguishing Feature in all his Publications) of most orderly and methodical Arrangement.*

Such extraordinary Genius and Learning, supported by such Purity of Life, and Uprightness of Character, were not likely to be long concealed from public Notice. Accordingly we find, that at a very early Age Mr. Swedberg became an Object of Royal Attention and Favour, being admitted to frequent Converse

* See on this Subject the Eulogy on Baron Swedenborg, composed and delivered by Mr. Sandall, before the Academy of Sciences at Stockholm, and lately translated into English. See also Remarks of *M. the Marquis de Thomé*, on an Assertion of the Commissioners appointed by the French King, for the Examination of Animal Magnetism, &c. communicated to the Authors of the *Journal Encyclopedique*, and inserted in the Vol. of 1 September, 1785. Tome VI. Part II.

verse with Charles XII. then King of Sweden, and appointed by him to the Office of Assessor of the Metallic College, a Place of great public Trust, and much Emolument. He was also ennobled in the Year 1719, by Queen Ulrica Eleanora, and named *Swedenborg*, from which Time he took his Seat with the Nobles of the Equestrian Order, in the triennial Assemblies of the States. He was made a Fellow, by Invitation, of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Stockholm, and had a like Honour conferred on him by foreign Societies. He lived in much Esteem with the Bishops and Nobles of his own Country, and his Acquaintance was also sought after by the most distinguished Characters in various Parts of Europe, with many of whom he continued to correspond till his Death.

These temporal Honours and Advan-

tages, in the Eyes of many, might perhaps appear of much Account; but by Baron Swedenborg they were considered only as Things of small Importance, especially when compared with the Honour to which about this Time (in the Year 1743) he was called, of a Nature so extraordinary, and in a Manner so memorable, that we should be tempted to suppress the Relation, as having the Appearance of Incredibility and Enthusiasm, did not the Cause of Truth require it, not only in enabling us to account for the Author's future Life and Writings, but also in Respect to the Sanction and Authority which were hereby stamped upon them.

As Baron Swedenborg has himself given a Relation of this Event, we think it best to confine ourselves to his own Words, since we would not willingly misrepresent it, either by magnifying or diminish-

diminishing the real Circumstances attending it. The Account is taken from a Letter written to a Friend, not many Years before his Death; in which, speaking of his temporal Circumstances, he thus expresses himself,

“ Whatever of worldly Honour and
 “ Advantage may appear to be in the
 “ Things before mentioned, I hold
 “ them but as Matters of low Estima-
 “ tion, when compared to the Honour
 “ of that holy Office, to which the
 “ Lord himself hath called me, who
 “ was graciously pleased to manifest
 “ himself to me his unworthy Servant,
 “ in a personal Appearance, in the
 “ Year 1743, to open in me a Sight of
 “ the spiritual World, and to enable
 “ me to converse with Spirits and An-
 “ gels; and this Privilege has continued
 “ with me to this Day. From that
 “ Time I began to print and publish
 “ various

“ various unknown Arcana, which have
“ been either seen by me or revealed to
“ me, concerning Heaven and Hell,
“ the State of Man after Death, the
“ true Worship of God, the spiritual
“ Sense of the Scriptures, and many
“ other important Truths tending to
“ Salvation and true Wisdom.”

It is easy to see what different Judgments will be formed by different Persons concerning the above Relation. The Atheist and Infidel will regard the Things contained in it as impossible, and will instantly reject it under that Idea: The Wit and the minute Philosopher will ridicule it as extravagant, and pronounce it the mere Effect of a warm and deluded Imagination: Even the serious and well-instructed Christian will have his Doubts concerning it's Reality, and will suspect the Fact, though he will not dispute it's Possibility. Su-
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pernatural Events, in all Ages of the World, have thus divided the Sentiments of Mankind, nor is it to be expected that in our own Age we shall be better agreed touching the Truth of a Relation so marvellous and miraculous, supported only by the Testimony of a single Witness. Caution likewise on such Occasions has always been deemed expedient by the truly good and enlightened, lest giving too hasty an Assent to Things extraordinary, they should encourage Imposture, and put it in the Power of weak or ill-disposed Persons to establish an Authority over the Minds of others, grounded only in the Infirmities or Depravities of their own.

But as an indiscriminate Reception of every supernatural Relation is dangerous, so an indiscriminate Rejection is no less so, and they have therefore
 ever

ever been equally avoided by all wise Men. Candor to examine, and Judgment to distinguish between Truth and Error, between Realities and Appearances, have for this Reason at all Times been accounted estimable Virtues; and general Rules for the Direction of the Judgment have accordingly been established and universally received, whereby the upright and sincere might be preserved from the Mischiefs attending a blind Credulity on the one Side, and a perverse Incredulity on the other.

It is not our Province at present to point out what those Rules are, much less to apply them to the Case in Question: We beg Leave however to suggest, with all Deference to the Sentiments of others, that it is the Duty of every candid Christian to examine well the Credibility of the above Testimony, and this without Partiality and without Prejudice,

Prejudice, inasmuch as the general Interests of Truth, which ought to be dear to every one, may be greatly affected by such an Examination. And as the Tenor of Baron Swedenborg's Life, dated from the above Event, to his Death, together with his Writings and the Doctrines therein contained, must needs have great and deserved Weight in the Determination of an impartial Judgment; it appears farther to be the Duty of every sincere Inquirer after the Truth, not to pronounce any Sentence, till he has faithfully and diligently weighed the several Circumstances respecting the latter Period of our Author's Life, as well as the Nature and Tendency of the Books written by him during that Period.

For the Information of such Inquirers the following Particulars were collected, and

and to their serious Consideration they are submitted.

It is well known that Baron Swedenborg, after the above extraordinary Call to be an Instructor of Mankind, dedicated himself entirely to the great Work which was assigned him. The future Part of his Life was spent, agreeably to the high Commission he had received, in studying diligently the Word of God, in opening and elucidating the great Truths therein contained, and in publishing them to his Fellow-Creatures, together with the important Information made known to him concerning another World. For this Purpose he frequently left his native Country to visit distant Cities, particularly London and Amsterdam, where all his Theological Works were printed by him at a great Expence, and with little Prospect or Probability of a Reimburse-

imbursement. Wherever he resided on
 his Travels, (according to the Testi-
 mony of a late Writer, who was person-
 ally acquainted with him,) " he was a
 " mere Solitary, and almost inaccessi-
 " ble, though in his own Country of a
 " free and open Behaviour. He affect-
 " ed no Honour, but declined it; pur-
 " sued no worldly Interest, but spent
 " his Time in travelling and printing,
 " in Order to communicate Instruction
 " and Benefit to Mankind. He had
 " Nothing of the Precisian in his Man-
 " ner, Nothing of Melancholy in his
 " Temper, and Nothing in the least
 " bordering on Enthusiasm in his Con-
 " versation or Writings." See the Rev.
 Mr. Hartley's Preface to the Treatise
 on Influx, &c. &c. also to the Treatise
 on Heaven and Hell. To this may be
 added, that he affected no Singularities,
 neither was he elated by Reason of his

extraordinary Gifts, so as to aim at any Pre-eminence in spiritual Things, or to set himself up as the Head of a Party. Far from the Spirit of a Sectarian, he loved good Men wherever he found them, and approved the Truth by whomsoever it was taught; nevertheless he was bold and free to censure Vice under all it's Forms, and amongst all it's Adherents; and to point out Errors, howsoever respectable the Names which gave them Authority. In short, his whole Life, from the Date of the above memorable Event, appears to have been that of a Man called to eminent and extraordinary Services; being orderly, prudent, pure, humble, and beneficent, suitable to the heavenly Intercourse to which he was admitted. He died at London, in the Year 1772, and after lying in State, was interred at the

the Swedish Church, near Radcliff-Highway.

It has been said indeed by some, and received implicitly without further Examination by others, that Baron Swedenborg, after receiving or pretending to receive the above extraordinary Commission, was mad, and became totally deprived of his rational Senses; but this Insinuation is such a palpable Contradiction to Truth, and such an Insult to common Sense, being over-ruled by every Page of our Author's Writings, as well as by every Act of his Life for nine and twenty Years together, after that Period, that we should have thought it altogether unworthy our Notice, were we not aware that it operates powerfully with many even at this Day, to prejudice them against a Character which otherwise they would revere, and against Writings from which they would other-

wise receive the most welcome Instruction; whilst in the mean Time they can give no reasonable Account of that Prejudice, nor trace it's Origin to any better Source than the unjust Calumny uttered of old against another respectable Name, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much Learning doth make thee mad," Acts xxvi. 24.

But to return.—It is in the Writings of the studious and contemplative that we must read their Lives, and learn what they were; and if we look at Baron Swedenborg in this View, we are astonished at the Greatness of his Labours, the Extent of his Knowledge, the Purity and Consistency of his Doctrines, the Order and Perspicuity of his Discussions, all which bespeak a Mind vastly above the common Sort, indefatigable in it's Exertions, profound in it's Researches, illuminated and clear in it's
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Perceptions ; pious, sober, and solid, in it's Principles.

The first of his Theological Works which presents itself to our Observation is the *Arcana Cœlestia*, or Heavenly Mysteries contained in the Sacred Scriptures, being an Explanation of the Books of Genesis and Exodus. This Work was published at London, from the Year 1747 to the Year 1758, in eight Volumes, 4to. and contains such a Variety of important Matter as can only be conceived by an attentive Reading of the Work itself. It's general Design is to assert and prove the Spirituality and Divinity of the Sacred Scriptures, whereby those holy Records are essentially distinguished from all other Books, and to shew wherein such Spirituality and Divinity consist. The pious Reader is herein surpris'd and delighted to find, that the holy Word of the Lord

throughout contains an internal or spiritual Sense, totally distinct from that of the Letter, yet united and making one with it in the Way of Correspondence. This internal or spiritual Sense is elucidated through the Books of Genesis and Exodus, and occasionally, in the Way of Illustration, through most of the other Books both of the Old and New Testament; whereby it is made appear, that not only the prophetical, but even the historical Parts of the sacred Word, under the Cover of the Letter, contain infinite Treasures of heavenly Wisdom, accommodated to the Understandings of Angels and Men, and relating to the Lord himself in a supreme Sense, to his Kingdom and Church in an inferior Sense, and to the Regeneration of Man, which is the Opening and Formation of the Lord's Kingdom and Church in him, in the lowest or most particular Sense.

Sense. The apparent Contradictions of the Letter are hereby shewn to be groundless, and we are no longer offended with those historical Relations, which in many Cases seem irreconcilable, trivial, and unworthy of the Divine Author; for in the Spirit, or spiritual Sense, all is seen to be harmonious, important, and worthy of God. Besides this spiritual Opening of the Holy Scriptures, whereby they are rendered most precious and edifying to every serious Mind, the Work before us contains various memorable Relations of what was seen and heard by the Author in the World of Spirits, together with curious Illustrations of the Doctrine of Correspondence in particular Relation to the human Body; the whole together forming a Book full of most heavenly Instruction for all who have any Meekness

ness or Desire to see "*the wondrous Things of God's Law.*"

The Work of our honourable Author, which occurs next in Order of Time, is his *Treatise on Heaven and Hell*, or an Account of the wonderful Things therein heard and seen, published also at London, in the Year 1758, in one Volume, 4to. In this Work the Vail is in some Sort drawn aside, which separates between the visible and invisible Worlds. The pious Reader is as it were introduced into the heavenly Societies, and taught the Laws and Manners of that blessed Kingdom, which is *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. Various, and heretofore unknown Particulars relating to the Peace, the Happiness, the Light, the Order of Heaven; together with the Forms, the Functions, the Habitations, and even the Garments of the heavenly Inhabitants, are treated of;

of ; all tending to cherish in the devout Soul magnificent Ideas of the Goodness, the Wisdom, and the Power of God, and the Glories of his Kingdom, and to stir it up to the Love and the Practice of Virtue. In this Work is experimentally proved, that Heaven is not a State of arbitrary Appointment, to which all may be admitted indiscriminately, without Regard to their Tempers and Habits of Life ; but that it is a State arising from the good Affections of the Heart, and a Correspondency of the Thoughts and Actions, as grounded in sincere Love towards God and Man, and operating according to the Laws of Order, which are the Truths of the holy Commandments. In the same Work may be seen the unhappy Lot of those who forget God, which Lot, like that of the Blessed, is shewn to be, not of arbitrary Appointment, but the necessary miserable

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Consequence of an evil and thoughtless Life, enslaved by the vile Affections of Self-Love and the Love of the World, without ever being brought under the Regulations of heavenly Love by a right Submission of the Will, the Understanding, and the Actions, to the Truth and Spirit of Heaven, which is the holy Law or Word of God. Nothing can be conceived more edifying, more animating, or more awful, than the Whole of this Work; it tends to strengthen every Inclination to Virtue, by pointing out the Particularities and Realities of it's Rewards, and at the same Time to check the Powers of Evil, by exhibiting the various Forms of eternal Darkness and Misery which await it in another World.

In the same Year, and at the same Place, our Author published the following smaller Tracts in Quarto, viz. 1. Of
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the New Jerusalem and it's Heavenly Doctrine. 2. Of the Last Judgment, and of the Destruction of Babylon. 3. Of the White Horse spoken of in the Revelation. 4. Of the Earths in the Universe, and their Inhabitants. And in the Year 1763, 1. The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Lord. 2. Concerning the Sacred Scripture. 3. The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem. 4. A Continuation of the Subject concerning the Last Judgment, and concerning the Spiritual World. All these Treatises by their Titles announce Matters of weighty Discussion and Information, nor do they disappoint the Expectations they excite. But we shall pass by them, (only recommending them to the Reader's serious Perusal) that we may be the more particular in our Account of the larger Works which follow, and which are these :

I. *An-*

1. *Angelic Wisdom in Regard to the Divine Love and Divine Wisdom.* This Work was published in Quarto, at Amsterdam, in the Year 1763, and contains perhaps one of the most complete, edifying, and satisfactory Systems of Metaphysics that the World ever saw. The Reader is no longer perplexed with the unintelligible *Monads* of Leibnitz, the *Subtleties* of Descartes, the *Idealities* of Malbranche and Berkeley, or shocked with the *Blasphemies* of Spinoza, and the pernicious Tenets of modern Materialism; but a clear, simple, yet most magnificent View of the Creator and of Creation is opened to his Understanding. The great Line of Distinction is drawn between God and Nature, between the Worker and the Work, and the enlightened Mind is enabled thereby so to separate between the one and the other, as to avoid all that Confusion, which in
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most other Systems is so apt to embarrass, not to say pervert the Ideas of the Reader. Spirit and Matter have each their special Boundaries allotted them, and it is shewn that each have their several distinct Degrees, but that these Degrees are such, that it is impossible the purest Degree of what is material should ever become spiritual, or that the lowest Degree of what is spiritual should ever become material. It is further shewn in this truly wonderful Work, how all Degrees, both of what is spiritual and what is natural, are united in Man, and that the several spiritual Degrees are opened in him, whensoever he hath a right Respect to his Creator, and submits his Life to the Regulations of the Laws of Divine Order. The great Doctrine of *Forms* also is proved and illustrated in this Work, whereby is made manifest this interesting Truth, that all

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the Subjects of Creation, under all their indefinite Varieties, whether spiritual or natural, are merely Forms diversely organized, and thereby diversely accommodated to the Reception of Life, not possessing in themselves any living Principle inherent in them as their own, but receiving, exercising, and enjoying such a Principle by continual Influx from another, and thus finally from God, the only Fountain of all Life. According to this Doctrine it is further shewn, that Man is a spiritual Form, receptive both of mediate and immediate spiritual Life, with all it's Blessings from God; an ordinate and upright Form, if he submits his Life to the Laws of Order and Uprightness, which are the Laws of God; but an inordinate and inverted Form, if he rejects those Laws, in which latter Case he perverts the Divine Influx, and turns spiritual Life into spiritual Death,
and

and Divine Blessing into the infernal Curse.

In the following Year a Sort of Companion to the above Work was published at the same Place, by our Author, entitled *Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Providence*. The Design of this Work is to shew, that the Laws, according to which the Divine Providence operates, have Respect to Man's eternal Bliss in the heavenly World, and of Consequence to his Purification and Regeneration in this World, as the only possible Means whereby his future Well-being can be secured. On this Ground it is clearly evinced, how the Permission of Evil is consistent with the Plan of the Divine Œconomy, and that the Prosperity of the Wicked in this Life is no Argument against the over-ruling Power and Order of an all-wise Administration

of Events. The Councils and Operations of the Deity in Regard to the Removal of Evils from Man, and his consequent Purification and Regeneration, are abundantly demonstrated consistently both with Scripture and Reason; and herein the Free-will of the Creature is shewn to be perfectly reconcileable with the Omnipotence of the Creator, and a necessary Principle to be exercised in Co-operation with the Divine Influence, inasmuch as otherwise the Creature can never be rendered a free Recipient of what is from God, and of Course can never become truly and perfectly blessed in God, which is the great End of Man's Creation. Such are the weighty and interesting Subjects treated of in this Work, and discussed with so much Order, Precision, sound Judgment, and Conformity to the Sacred Writings, that

that it can never enough be recommended to the serious Perusal and Consideration of Mankind.

But Works of equal or superior Importance yet demand our Attention. In the Year 1764, the *Apocalypse Revealed* was first published in one large Volume, quarto, at Amsterdam; a Work of which it is impossible to give the Reader any adequate Idea. Suffice it to say, that it contains a full and satisfactory Opening of the deep Arcana contained in that mysterious Book, which the good and learned in all Ages have in vain endeavoured to unfold. From this Opening or Explanation it is made very manifest, that the prophetic Parts of the Revelation have immediate Reference not only to the past, but also to the present Times of the Christian Dispensation; containing a full History of the successive Declensions of the Church from it's

original Purity, till it is come at last to a miserable State of Babylonish Corruption and Confusion. Howsoever the pious Reader may be troubled under this Idea, he will not fail to be equally consoled under the certain Promises of “the holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband ;” which Words are interpreted by our enlightened Author as descriptive of a new Dispensation of heavenly Truth, breaking through and dissipating the Darkness which at this Day prevails on the Earth, whereby the Laws of the Divine Order, and the Œconomy of God’s Kingdom, Providence, and marvellous Operations, will be more clearly and fully understood, and the Hearts of Men will be thus opened to a nearer Intercourse with Heaven, and rendered admissive of the purer Influences of Gospel Love

Love and Charity in their Lives and Conversations. It is a Circumstance which merits Consideration, that the deep Mysteries of this Book of the Revelation are opened by the same Key, (viz. the Doctrine of Correspondencies between Things spiritual and Things natural,) which served before to open the Books of Genesis and Exodus; and the Reader is amazed to see, by demonstrative Evidence, how this is the true and only Key whereby the Sacred Writings can be fully opened, explained, and reconciled.

This Work was succeeded by another in the Year 1768, and published at the same Place, entitled *The Delights of Wisdom respecting Conjugal Love, and the Pleasures of Infinity respecting Scortatory Love*, in one Volume, quarto. The Title of this Work, at first Sight, does not seem to announce any Thing connected

original Purity, till it is come at last to a miserable State of Babylonish Corruption and Confusion. Howsoever the pious Reader may be troubled under this Idea, he will not fail to be equally consoled under the certain Promises of “the holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband ;” which Words are interpreted by our enlightened Author as descriptive of a new Dispensation of heavenly Truth, breaking through and dissipating the Darknefs which at this Day prevails on the Earth, whereby the Laws of the Divine Order, and the Œconomy of God’s Kingdom, Providence, and marvellous Operations, will be more clearly and fully understood, and the Hearts of Men will be thus opened to a nearer Intercourse with Heaven, and rendered admiffive of the purer Influences of Gospel Love

Love and Charity in their Lives and Conversations. It is a Circumstance which merits Consideration, that the deep Mysteries of this Book of the Revelation are opened by the same Key, (viz. the Doctrine of Correspondencies between Things spiritual and Things natural,) which served before to open the Books of Genesis and Exodus; and the Reader is amazed to see, by demonstrative Evidence, how this is the true and only Key whereby the Sacred Writings can be fully opened, explained, and reconciled.

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connected with Religion or the Law of God, but on Examination it is found that the Interests of every Thing serious are united with the important Subject therein discussed; which is no less than a scriptural and rational Investigation of the Origin, Nature, Laws, Uses, End, and Duration of conjugal Love, and of it's Opposite, which is scortatory Love. By this Investigation, which is equally clear, orderly, and convincing, it appears that *true conjugal Love* has it's Ground in the Marriage Union of Love and Wisdom, or of Goodness and Truth, consequently in the Love of the Lord and the Church, acquiring a Degree of Power, Blessedness, Purity, and Permanency in Man, proportioned to his Advancement in such Marriage Union. On the other Hand, it is as clearly proved, that *scortatory Love* originates in the Disjunction of Love and Wisdom, or of Goodness

Goodness and Truth, consequently of the Lord and his Church; and, according to the Measure of such Disjunction, acquires it's mischievous and condemning Power and Ascendancy over the human Heart. Hence it is made manifest, that the State of true conjugal Love amongst Men has always kept Pace with the State of religious Love and Wisdom, being spiritual with the spiritual, natural with the natural, and carnal with the adulterous. In this Work the Author likewise proves, in the most satisfactory and clear Manner, that true conjugal Love can only subsist between one Husband and one Wife, and thus cautions the Mind against that dangerous and antichristian Doctrine of a Plurality of Wives, which has lately been propagated, and confirmed from certain Passages of the Old Testament falsely understood. It further appears from the
Author's

Author's Testimony in this most edifying and extraordinary Work, that conjugal Love remains after Death; and hence is suggested to every considerate Mind, a most powerful Argument to a good and religious Life, inasmuch as the Blessedness of that Love in Eternity will depend altogether upon the Degree of Purification and Regeneration attained to by the sincere Love of God, the right Understanding of his Laws, and a conformable Practice in the Life and Conversation. The Subject therefore of this Work, well considered, is worthy of all Attention, and is earnestly recommended to public Notice.

Passing by two small Treatises, the one entitled *A Brief Exposition of the Doctrines of the New Church*, and the other *Concerning the Commerce or Communication between Soul and Body*, we come now to the last of our Author's Works,
published

published in quarto, at Amsterdam, in the Year 1771, and entitled *True Christian Religion, containing the Universal Theology of the New Church, which was foretold by the Lord in Daniel vii. 13, 14; and in the Revelation xxi. 1, 2.* It is remarkable, that this Work was written by Baron Swedenborg when in the eighty-second Year of his Age, and yet exhibits all the Marks of a vigorous and lively Understanding. It may be considered as a Summary of all his other Theological Writings, in which his Doctrines are as it were concentrated, and brought into one Point of View; and on this Account it is to be recommended to the Perusal of all who wish to get a general Idea of the Contents of the preceding Books. The Subjects principally treated of in this Work are these: 1. Of God the Creator, and of Creation. 2. Of the Lord the Redeemer,

deemer, and of Redemption. 3. Of the Holy Ghost, and of the Divine Operation, and of the Divine Trinity. 4. Of the Sacred Scripture, or Word of the Lord. 5. The Catechism, or Decalogue, explained as to it's external and internal Sense. 6. Of Faith. 7. Of Charity, or Love towards our Neighbour, and of good Works. 8. Of Free-will. 9. Of Repentance. 10. Of Reformation and Regeneration. 11. Of Imputation. 12. Of Baptism. 13. Of the Holy Supper. 14. Of the Consummation of the Age; of the Coming of the Lord; and of the New Heaven and New Church. In the Discussion of these various Subjects may be seen our Author's leading Sentiments on some of the chief Doctrines of Christianity, and wherein he differs from, as well as wherein he agrees with, received Systems. In treating on the *Godhead*, he
disal-

disallows of a Tripersonality in his Nature, contending that such an Idea is both erroneous and dangerous, grounded in a gross Misconception of the Divine Being, and serving to distract the Minds of all true sincere Worshipers. Nevertheless he acknowledges a *Divine Trinity*, though not a Trinity of Persons, and proves from various Authorities, both of the Old and New Testament, that this Trinity is in the *one Person* of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, consisting of three distinct Powers or Principles, viz. the essential Divine Principle, the Divine Human, and the Divine Proceeding, which together form one God or Lord, just as the Soul, Body, and Operations of Man form one Man. Agreeable to this Idea, the Lord *Jesus Christ* in the New Testament is shewn to be no other than the *Jehovah* of the Old, made manifest in the Flesh, and

essentially united with the Human Nature or Principle, which he assumed and made Divine; from which Union proceeds the sacred Operation called in Scripture the *Holy Ghost*. Having thus fully opened and explained his Doctrine concerning the Christian *Lord and Redeemer*, he next proceeds to unfold the true Nature of *Redemption*, as consisting, not in a vicarious Sacrifice, and Atonement thereby of Divine Wrath, but in a real Subjugation of Hell or the Powers of Darkness, and in a Glorification of the Human Nature, whereby the Minds of Men were rescued from impending Destruction, and had Power again given them to work out their Salvation, and become the regenerate Sons of God. From these important Subjects he proceeds to a Consideration of the Sacred Scriptures, or Word of God, asserting their Divinity and Spirituality, accord-

according to what was shewn above in speaking of the Arcana Coelestia. In the remaining Chapters may be seen what his Sentiments are in Regard to a truly Christian Life. He allows of no *Faith* but what is grounded in Charity, and operates according to the Laws of eternal Truth and Order, which are the Commandments of God: Neither does he call that Charity, which frequently passes under the venerable Name; but defines it to be a living Principle of heavenly Love in the Soul, leading it to depart from all Iniquity, and to act uprightly and sincerely before God and Man in the Discharge of every Duty, and under every Engagement and Relation of Life. He grounds the Necessity of *Repentance* in the fallen State of the human Soul, as immersed in Evil both hereditary and actual, from which it can never be delivered but by sincere

Examination of itself, in the Light of the Divine Truth, touching it's Evils, attended with an earnest Desire and Endeavour to depart from them. The Removal of Evils after sincere Repentance is what is properly signified by the *Remission of Sins*; as the consequent Growth of the Soul in the new Life of Faith and Charity comprizes, according to our Author, the full and perfect Sense of Christian Regeneration. Hence is shewn the Nature and Necessity of Man's *Free-will*, together with the dreadful Consequences of the *predestinarian System*, and the no less false and dangerous Tenets respecting an *Imputation* of the Merits and Righteousness of Christ. Next are pointed out the true End, Design, and Uses of the two Sacraments of *Baptism* and the *Holy Supper*, opened and explained agreeable to the Doctrine of Correspondencies between

between Things natural and spiritual. And lastly, amidst the Depravity and Darkness which have overspread the Face of Christendom at this Day, we are consoled by the Prospect of a glorious Church, the *New Jerusalem Dispensation*, or *second Advent of our Lord*, as promised both in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, consisting, according to our Author, not in the Destruction of the visible Heavens and Earth, but in the Manifestation of the pure Laws of Order, which are the Laws of Heaven, to Mankind, derived from the holy Word of God; whereby the Mists of Error will be dissipated, and the Divine Will made known more perfectly; so that if Man's Life be conformable thereto, he will be enabled to attain unto close Conjunction with Heaven in the Spirit of Righteousness, Truth, and Peace, and being restored

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to an heavenly Life, Form, and Image in this World, will hereafter most assuredly have his eternal Lot with the blessed in the heavenly Kingdom.

Such are the great Outlines of the Doctrines delivered in the Writings of Baron Swedenborg, which from their Nature and Importance, as well as from the extraordinary Character of the Writer, most assuredly demand the serious Attention of every Christian. Might we be permitted to give our Sentiments respecting their *genuine Tendency*, we should say, that they seem highly calculated to make Men think justly, and to live uprightly, virtuously, and peaceably, according to the true Spirit of God's Commandments: They tend to deliver the Mind from the Intricacies and Perplexities of many erroneous Opinions, which are at present circulating in the Church, and at the same Time from
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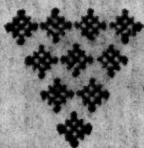
the Disorders of Fanaticism, Superstition, and Enthusiasm, by opening, in a wonderful Simplicity, Purity, and Consistency, the great Laws of Order, which are the Laws of eternal Truth: They inculcate a high Reverence and Love for the Person of the *Redeemer*, by shewing who and what *He* is, and likewise for his holy Word, by unfolding the hidden Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Truth therein contained: They confirm every Motive to a religious and obedient Life, by exhibiting an experimental Testimony, such as was never before vouchsafed to Man, concerning the blessed Fruits of Holiness, and the miserable Consequences of Sin, in another World. In short, the Church has every Thing to hope from their universal Reception, and Nothing to fear, whilst it continues to be accounted an essential Characteristic of the Church—to know
and

and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and keep his Commandments.

It may now very naturally be asked, whether these Doctrines are any where publicly taught, and whether any particular Mode of Worship has been adopted by those who embrace them. But, according to the best Information we have been able to obtain, it does not appear that any Thing of this Kind has actually taken Place as yet ;* their chief Concern being an Attention to the Duties and Substance of Religion, without a tenacious Adherence to any of it's Forms ; well knowing that every Form or Mode of Worship is accepted by God, where his Word is acknowledged, and the Sacraments duly administered. Societies, however, are already formed in different Parts of Europe for propagating the Doctrines of Baron Swedenborg,

* Anno 1786.

borg, all which are conducted in a peaceable and becoming Manner; and where Societies have not yet been established, there are nevertheless many Individuals who admire his Writings, and declare their full and hearty Concurrence with all that he advances; particularly in England, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Turkey, and even in the East and West Indies, and America.





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